

# Education is Iowa's Future



Annual Update on the Strategic Plan

*Measures of Success and Major Initiatives*

2009



# State Board of Education

State of Iowa  
Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

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Our Vision: Iowa students will become productive citizens in a democratic society and successful participants in a global community.

Our Mission is to champion excellence for all Iowa students through leadership and service.



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## GOAL 1 – *All children will enter school ready to learn. (Early Childhood)*

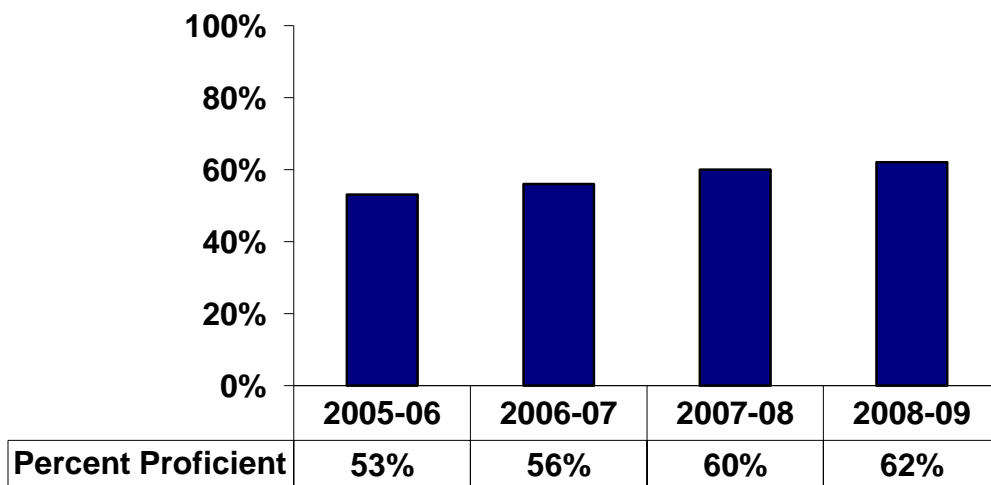
### Measures of Success

#### MEASURE 1: Increase the percentage of children entering kindergarten ready to read.

Kindergarten Literacy Assessment data was collected and analyzed in accordance with 2005 legislation requiring local school districts to administer Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or a kindergarten benchmark assessment adopted by the DE to every kindergarten student enrolled in the district. The graph included below represents four years of trend data for DIBELS. (Only one measure of the DIBELS assessment data is used; whether children know beginning sounds.) As indicated in Figure 1, the percent of children proficient in beginning sounds as measured by DIBELS increased by 2 percent from 2007-2008 to 2008-2009.

Figure 1

#### Percent of Children Entering Kindergarten Proficient in Beginning Sounds Using DIBELS



Data Source: Project EASIER, Iowa Department of Education, 2008-2009

**MEASURE 2: Increase the percentage of four-year-old children participating in a quality preschool program.**

According to census data for 2007, Iowa had 39,627 four-year-old children. In 2007-2008, there were 5,126 children that received preschool programming through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Olds. Four-year-olds also received programming in a number of other state and federally funded settings, including Head Start, Shared Visions Preschool Programs, Title I and Early Childhood Special Education. In 2007-2008, a total of 14,621 children or 37% of the four-year-old children participated in state and federally funded quality preschool programs.

The following table provides the number of children served in each setting. Some children may attend more than one type of funded program, so there may be some duplication in these data.

Table 1  
**Number and Percentage of Four-Year-Olds Attending State  
or Federally Funded Quality Preschool Programs  
2007-2008**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Number Served</b>
Head Start	4,168
Shared Visions Preschool Programs	1,733
Title I	1,820
Early Childhood Special Education	1,774
Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Olds	5,126
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>14,621</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>37%</b>

Because four-year-old children attend other community care and education settings, not all of them affiliated with a school district, an accurate unduplicated child count is challenging. Data collection options will continue to be reviewed to improve unduplicated child count from state and federally funded programs, as well as those not affiliated with a school district.

## **Major Initiatives**

### **INITIATIVE 1: Implement the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Olds.**

#### **Purpose**

Research increasingly shows the importance of quality, early learning environments in a child's development. Young children exposed to high-quality settings exhibit better language and math skills, better cognitive and social skills and better relationships with classmates than do children in lower-quality care. Evaluations of well-run early learning programs have also found that children in those environments were less likely to drop out of school, repeat grades, need special education, or get into future trouble with the law than similar children who did not have such exposure. Environments that support the stimulation and nurturing of children play a crucial role in developing the full capacity of a child to learn.

For that reason the State Board of Education and Department of Education (DE) sought legislation and funding to establish a Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Olds. The Department's Early Childhood Services Bureau is implementing this program in collaboration with local districts and area education agencies (AEA). All Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs must meet one of three standards:

- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS);
- Head Start Program Performance Standards, or
- National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation.

#### **Activities and Accomplishments**

The DE developed an application process and technical assistance guide for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children. Also, technical assistance sessions were provided for both the application and implementation processes. DE staff provided ICN and teleconference sessions to guide district implementation over the last two years. The DE staff provided administrator training sessions for those new to the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program.

One hundred eighty-one applications were received for 2007-2008, one hundred sixty one for 2008-2009, and one hundred twenty-four for 2009-2010. A total of 113 districts were awarded grants during the first two years of funding. Three of these awards include district consortiums for a total of 118 participating districts.

## **Results**

The DE continues efforts to support the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children. In 2007-2008, 64 districts were awarded grants serving 5,126 four-year-old children. An additional 49 districts were awarded grants for 2008-2009. Based on the Certified Enrollment Count (October 2009), a total of 9,676 four-year-old children received preschool programming during 2008-2009. The Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year Old Children information is available on the DE website. Based on implementation during the first two years, the application and technical assistance materials were revised for the 2009-2010 application.

## **On the Horizon**

The DE will continue work with the area education agencies (AEAs) to provide the necessary support to these districts and communities for implementing the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children. The DE is creating an Implementation Guidance Manual and a web-based data collection system to assist in monitoring the program.

## **INITIATIVE 2: *Develop a comprehensive early childhood professional development system.***

### **Purpose**

In order to provide quality early childhood environments for young children, it is essential to have quality teachers providing care and education for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

The 2008 General Assembly passed the Education Appropriations bill with statutory requirements for the allocation of one time funds (\$915,000) to implement a statewide early childhood professional development system through the AEAs. The DE allocated additional IDEA federal funds to support early childhood special education (619 Federal Project Funds). The state and federal funds were designated to support the Statewide Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children and Early Childhood Special Education programs.

Based upon formative and summative data, AEAs determined the need for professional development and follow-up/technical assistance with staff from the AEA, LEA and community partners to ensure quality standards and practices were being implemented accurately and frequently in the preschool programs.

The funding focused on three priorities:

- Support professional development for Creative Curriculum and Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards;
- Build capacity of AEA staff to sustain a system of support; and
- Provide districts professional development (PD) and follow-up/technical assistance (TA) for the preschool programs.

In addition, the DE supported the Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) Professional Development Component Workgroup to plan and develop various components of an early care, health, and education professional development system. The DE received state funding from the Iowa Community Empowerment Office for 2008-2009 to fund the following initiatives to enhance the components of the professional development system:

- Conduct a comprehensive workforce study of Iowa's early care and education;
- Develop competencies and levels for early childhood professionals;
- Collaborate with Department of Public Health to provide leadership and professional development in areas of maternal depression, drug exposure and child development; and
- Implement PD and TA to integrate Program-Wide Positive Behavior Supports into preschool programs.

## **Results**

The Iowa Department of Education (DE) in conjunction with a multi-agency workgroup has been developing competencies and levels for early childhood professionals based on the NAEYC Personnel Preparation Standards. It was agreed that the NAEYC standards needed further definition in the form of levels and competencies in order to create pathways for early care and education as well as teaching personnel. DE staff has been working with an outside facilitator and the multi-agency workgroup to develop levels and competencies. It is anticipated the levels and competencies will lay a foundation for creating articulation.

The DE has also been supporting the work of the early childhood Alliance in order to recruit more qualified staff into the early childhood programs. The Alliance, an organization of community college personnel, has aligned their courses and course numbers across several community colleges. These courses have been designated as college credit that will achieve the Child Development Associate (CDA) National Credential. The Alliance has been working with some community colleges to provide support in achieving the NAEYC Associates Degree Program accreditation. In addition, the Alliance has been working towards increasing the number of early childhood courses that may be accepted for transfer credit into the program of study at baccalaureate degree granting institutions.

## **On the Horizon**

Future work will focus on the development of competencies, requirements to meet levels, and necessary alignment of courses to articulate between agencies, community colleges, and universities. The Iowa Workforce Development Agency will complete a workforce study that includes information on education levels, retention, compensation, and benefits of Iowa's workforce for early care and education. In addition, the Iowa Department of Public Health will support an Early Childhood Professional Development website with resources and information for early care, health and education. The DE will continue to work with the Iowa Community Empowerment Office to allocate the use of professional development funds to sustain these efforts.

## **INITIATIVE 3: Support implementation of the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS).**

### **Purpose**

If the State is to provide quality early childhood environments for its young children, it is critical to have quality standards by which to evaluate preschool programs.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

The Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS) were developed by the DE to ensure the quality of preschool programs in district-funded programs. The IQPPS is derived from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards and Criteria. Districts participating in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children are required to adhere to one of three program standards. The IQPPS is the program standard used by 51 out of 64 districts awarded in 2007-2008 and 43 out of 49 districts awarded in 2008-2009. In 2007-2008, districts were required to implement one of the three program standards in classrooms serving preschool children in special education. The DE continues to focus on providing consistent, statewide professional development to support the integrity of IQPPS implementation and the verification of programs.

Professional development for the IQPPS is supported by DE state staff and AEA staff. First districts are invited to participate in ICNs providing an overview of the ten standards by state Early Childhood Consultants. Following the ICNs, trained AEA early childhood consultants target specific essential criteria linked to the IQPPS. The small group follow-up sessions adhere to the Iowa Professional Development Model to generalize information from theory to practical application. Curriculum developed for the small groups was developed through the DE and allows for consistent, clear instruction to improve the quality of preschool learning environments.



In 2007-2008, the DE developed and piloted a standardized process to verify the implementation of the IQPPS. Districts participating in Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Olds and implementing IQPPS, participate in the verification process during the second year of funding. Each IQPPS district is visited by a trained team consisting of at least one DE early childhood consultant and one AEA early childhood consultant. The verification process consists of classroom observations, interviews, and review of portfolio documents.

## **Results**

During the 2008-2009 school year, 51 school districts were scheduled to receive an IQPPS verification visit. Preliminary data indicate that these districts are making great strides in providing a quality preschool experience.

## **On the Horizon**

The greatest opportunities for improving the quality of early childhood programming in Iowa lie in three areas:

- Implementing and improving the quality of the Preschool Programs for Four-Year-Olds and Early Childhood Special Education Programs;
- Assuring adequate levels of compliance through the IQPPS Verification process; and
- Supporting the implementation of a statewide early childhood professional development system in conjunction with the AEAs to improve instructional strategies and program quality.

The DE continues to develop technical assistance and monitor the implementation of the Preschool Programs for Four-Year-Olds. DE staff will conduct IQPPS Verification Visits in the 43 districts providing the Preschool Programs for Four-Year-Olds that selected IQPPS. Beginning in 2009-2010, the DE will also monitor the implementation of IQPPS in early childhood special education and early childhood programs serving children on an IEP as a part of the IQPPS Verification Visit in these 43 districts. The visits will assess the level of compliance with administrative rules, IQPPS criteria, and the extent of collaboration with community partners. Increased funding from the legislature, as allocated over a four year period, will allow additional districts to provide quality programming for four-year-olds. In addition, the DE is submitting a proposal to the Community Empowerment Office to use designated professional development funds to build capacity of community partners to verify community preschool programs implementing IQPPS. Once these programs who participated in a pilot project supported by funding from the Office of Special Education Programs State Improvement Grant are verified for meeting IQPPS, it is anticipated that the data will be collected and included in the percent of children attending quality preschools.

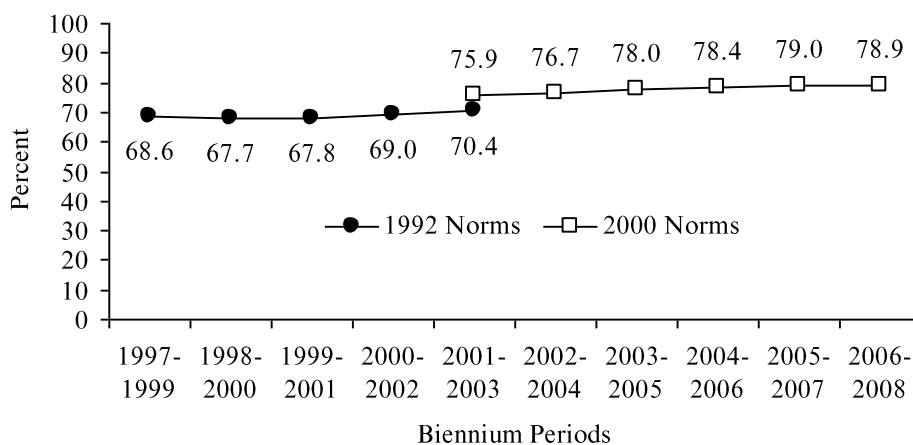
## GOAL 2 – All K-12 students will achieve at a high level. (K-12)

### Measures of Success

**MEASURE 1:** Increase the percentage of 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students achieving proficient or higher in reading and mathematics.

Figure 2

**Percent of Iowa 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Proficient on ITBS Reading Comprehension Test, Biennium Periods 1997-1999 to 2006-2008**

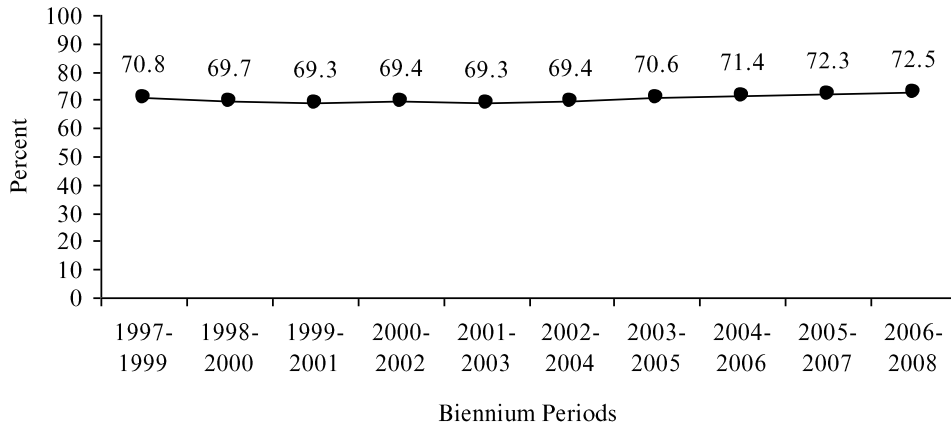


Source: Iowa Testing Programs, University of Iowa.

Note: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g. 2001-2003 represents the average for the 2001-2002 and the 2002-2003 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:  
Usually understands factual information and new words in context.  
Usually is able to make inferences and interpret either non-literal language or information in new contexts.  
Often can determine a selection's main idea and analyze its style and structure.

Figure 3

**Percent of Iowa 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Proficient on ITBS Reading Comprehension Test, Biennium Periods 1997-1999 to 2006-2008**

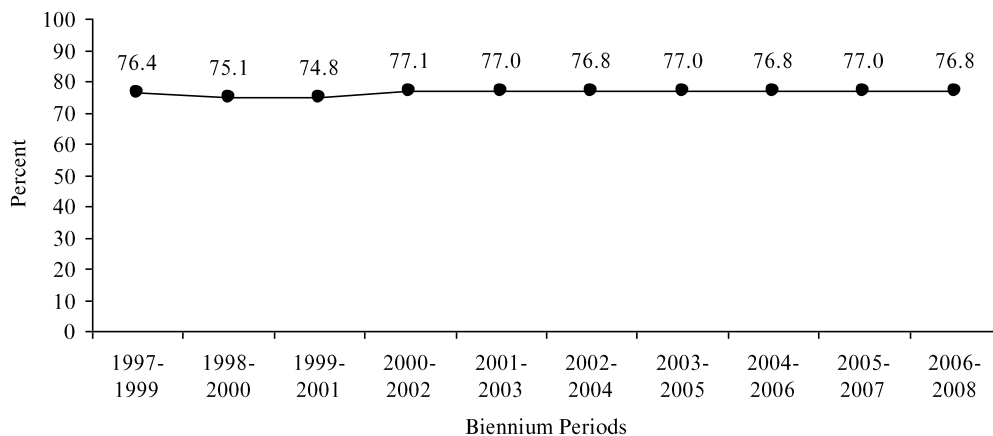


Source: Iowa Testing Programs, University of Iowa.

Note: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g. 2001-2003 represents the average for the 2001-2002 and the 2002-2003 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:  
Usually is able to understand factual information and new words in context, make inferences, and interpret information in new contexts.  
Often is able to determine a selection's main idea, identify its author's purpose or viewpoint, and analyze its style and structure.

Figure 4

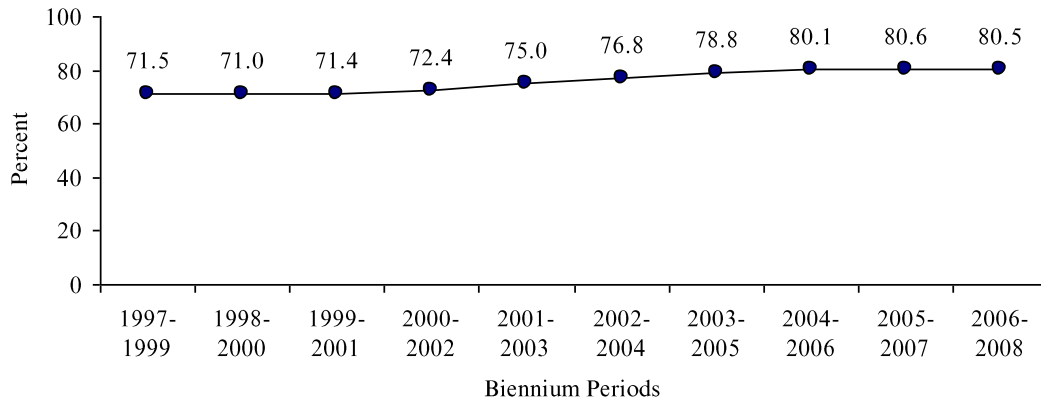
**Percent of Iowa 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Proficient on ITED Reading Comprehension Test, Biennium Periods 1997-1999 to 2006-2008**



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, University of Iowa.

Note: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g. 2001-2003 represents the average for the 2001-2002 and the 2002-2003 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:  
Usually understands stated information and ideas; often is able to infer implied meaning, draw conclusions, and interpret non-literal language; and usually is able to make generalizations from or about a text, identify author's purpose or viewpoint, and evaluate aspects of its style or structure.

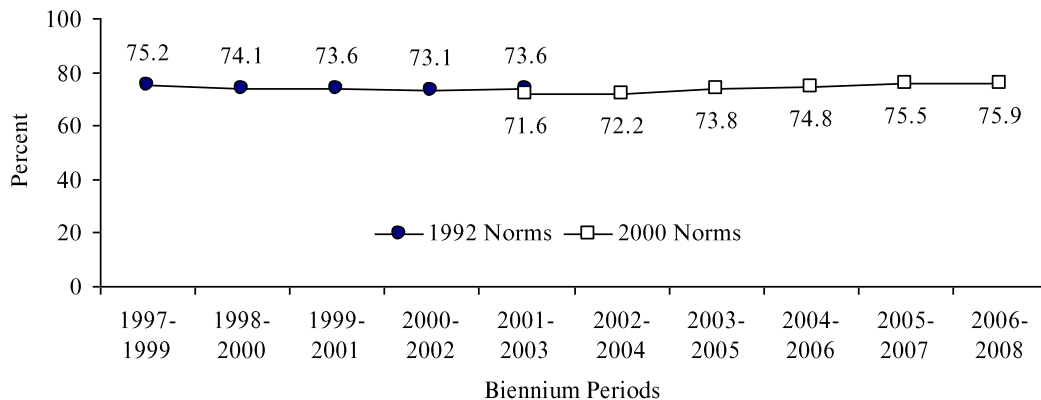
Figure 5  
**Percent of Iowa 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Proficient on ITBS  
Mathematics Test, Biennium Periods 1997-1999 to 2006-2008**



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, University of Iowa.

Note: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g. 2001-2003 represents the average for the 2001-2002 and the 2002-2003 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:  
Is developing an understanding of many math concepts, usually is able to solve simple and complex problems and use estimation methods, and can interpret data from graphs and tables.

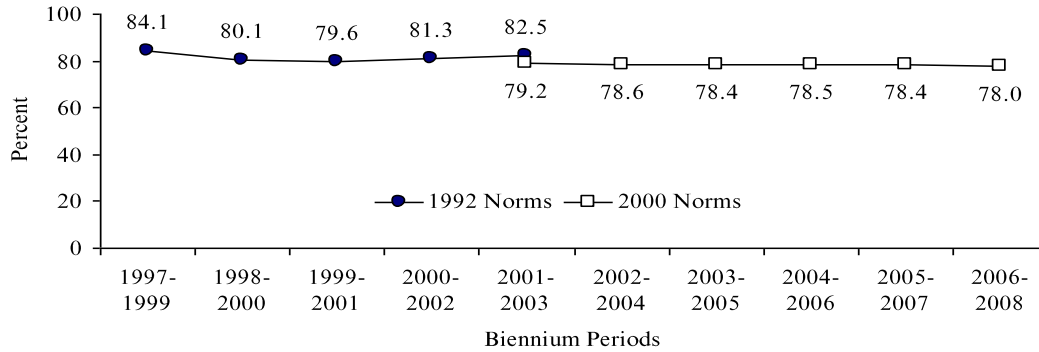
Figure 6  
**Percent of Iowa 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Proficient on ITBS  
Mathematics Test, Biennium Periods 1997-1999 to 2006-2008**



Source: Iowa Testing Programs, University of Iowa.

Note: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g. 2001-2003 represents the average for the 2001-2002 and the 2002-2003 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:  
Usually can understand math concepts and solve simple and complex word problems, sometimes can use estimation methods, and usually is able to interpret data from graphs and tables.

Figure 7  
Percent of Iowa 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Proficient on ITED  
Mathematics Test, Biennium Periods 1997-1999 to 2006-2008

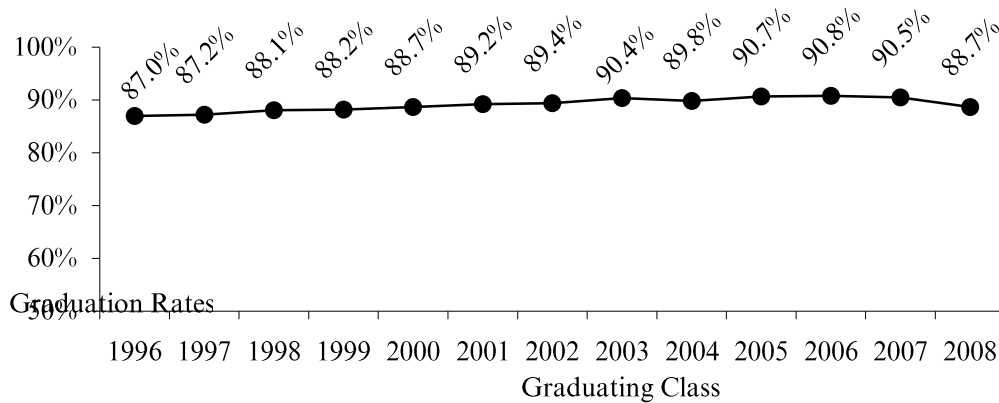


Source: Iowa Testing Programs, University of Iowa.

Note: Percentages for each biennium period represent average percentages of proficient students for the two school years represented, e.g. 2001-2003 represents the average for the 2001-2002 and the 2002-2003 school years. A student designated as proficient can, at a minimum, do the following:  
Sometimes applies math concepts and procedures, makes inferences with quantitative information, and solves a variety of quantitative reasoning problems.

## MEASURE 2: Increase the percentage of students who graduate from high school.

Figure 8  
Iowa Public School Graduation Rates  
Graduating Classes of 1996 to 2008

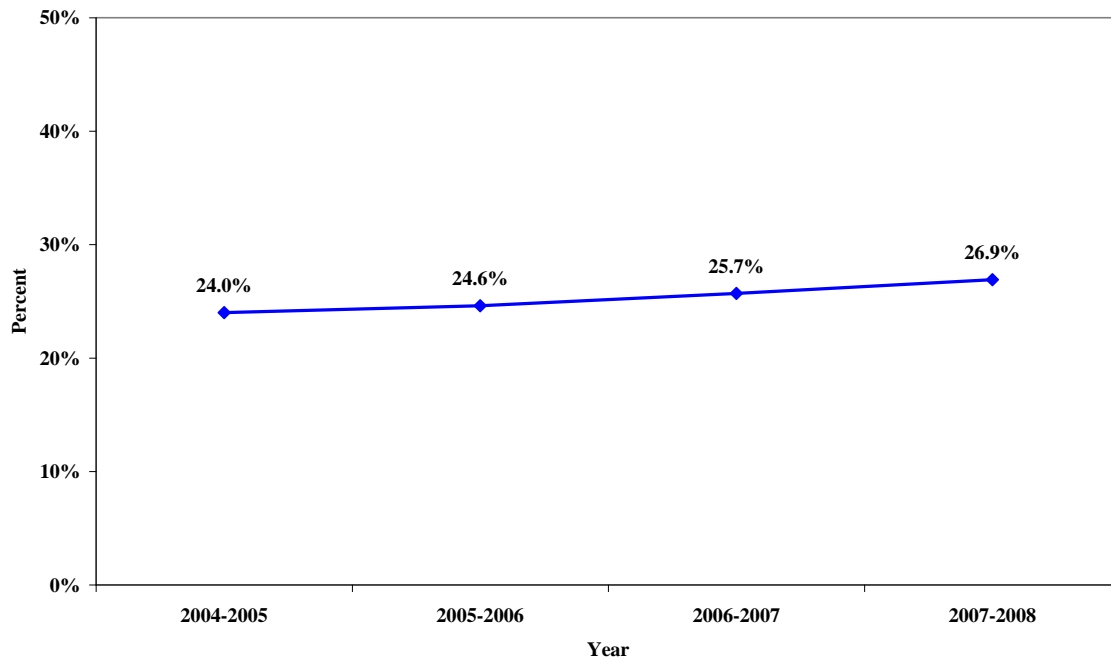


Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, Development and Evaluation Services, Basic Educational Data Survey, High School Completers and Dropout files.

Note: Although the graduation rate has decreased slightly, Iowa continues to have one of the highest graduation rates in the country. The adjustment in the rate is due, in part, to enhancements in Iowa's data system. The 2008 graduating class is the first group of students to have had a statewide identification number for all four years. This has allowed Iowa school districts and the Iowa Department of Education to keep careful accounting of each ninth grader as he or she progressed through school. The system has provided advancements in determining when a student graduates, even if the student moved to a different district in the state during his or her high school career.

**MEASURE 3: Increase the number of high school students taking advanced coursework.**

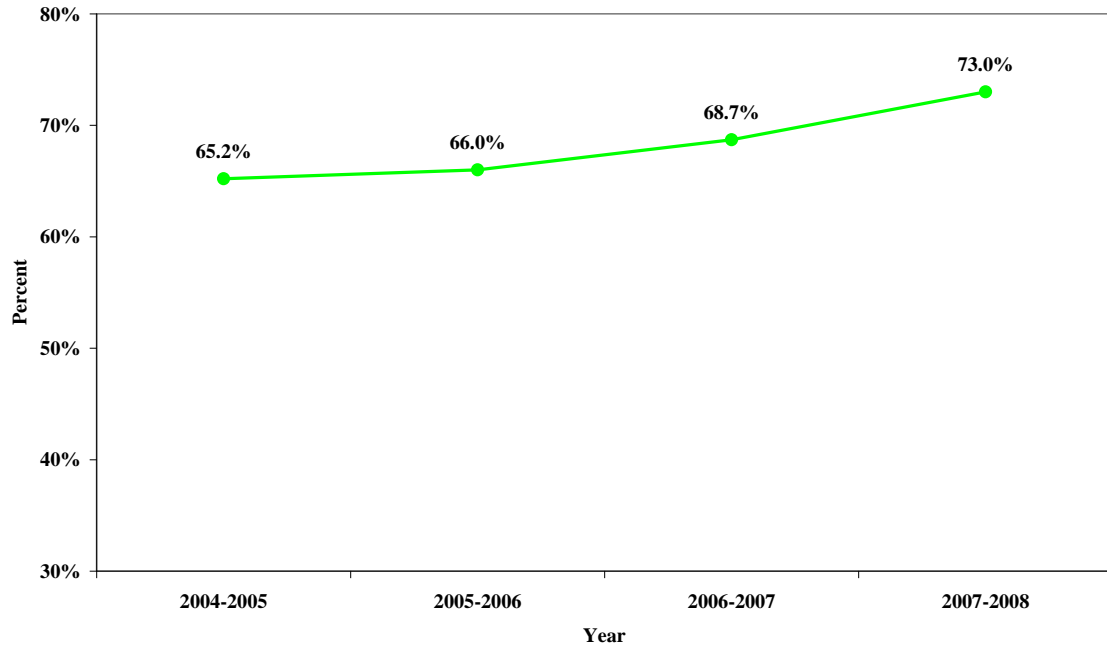
Figure 9  
**Estimated Percent of Iowa Public School Juniors and Seniors  
Enrolled in Higher-Level Mathematics\***



Source: Iowa Department of Education

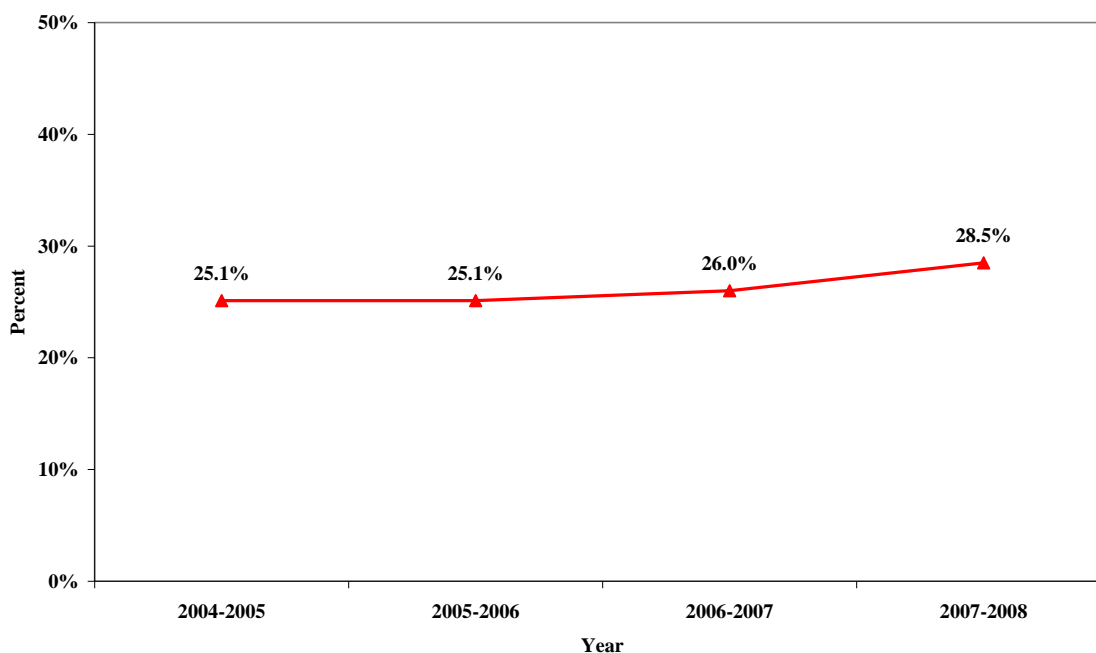
Note: \*Higher-Level Mathematics includes pre-calculus, calculus, trigonometry, statistics, and Advanced Placement mathematics.

Figure 10  
**Estimated Percent of Iowa Public School  
Juniors Enrolled in Chemistry**



**Source:** Iowa Department of Education

Figure 11  
**Estimated Percent of Iowa Public School  
Seniors Enrolled in Physics**



**Source:** Iowa Department of Education

## Major Initiatives

**INITIATIVE 1: Provide professional development and technical assistance for school districts and area education agencies (AEAs) in the areas of literacy, science, mathematics, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).**

### Reading

#### Purpose

The DE's professional development and technical assistance efforts are designed to engage school districts in the development and implementation of a comprehensive, quality K-12 literacy program that will improve student achievement. This effort is supported through multiple initiatives: Every Child Reads (ECR), Statewide Reading Team (SWRT), Reading First, Adolescent Literacy, and the Teacher Development Academies (TDAs). The focus of these efforts is to develop and refine a professional development strategy for large-scale, building-based structured school improvement focused on accelerating the literacy achievement of every student.



At the elementary level, the Every Child Reads (ECR) K-3 effort is designed to support the implementation of a research-based comprehensive reading program. The Elementary Statewide Reading Team (SWRT) is focused on building the capacity to meet this goal. In addition, this group supports the DE's Reading First Program that targets accelerating the reading achievement of students in kindergarten through third grade in low performing-high poverty schools so that all students are reading at grade level by the end of third grade.

At the secondary level, the Adolescent Literacy Research and Development Team provides reports on best practices and provides professional development materials.

The Department sponsors several Teacher Development Academies (TDAs) that target the secondary level. The TDAs are designed to increase student achievement through quality professional development while addressing high demand content areas. Each TDA includes the design structures of Iowa's Professional Development Model. Trainers provide the theory and demonstrations, facilitate practice, and work with school teams of teachers and administrators to build opportunities for peer collaboration in the workplace to address implementation issues and analyze student performance. Three of the TDAs are specifically developed to address the high need and high demand area of adolescent reading: Question-Answer Relationships (QAR), Concept Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI), and Second Chance Reading (SCR).

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

#### **Every Child Reads (ECR) K-12/Statewide Reading Team (SWRT)**

Statewide Reading Team members continued to support both Reading First and Every Child Reads schools during the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years. During 2007-2008, eleven additional days of professional development were provided through the continued development and expansion of the ECR: Teaching and Learning Professional Development Materials. During the 2008-2009 school year, the focus for the Team's eight days of professional development has been using talk-alouds to promote the student understanding and use of the reading-writing relationship, and promoting reading comprehension and leadership development. Additionally, the Team devoted a day in April 2009 to a focus on the critical elements of reading instruction with Dr. Anita Archer, a nationally-recognized authority in reading.

#### **Reading First**

Fifty-five school buildings are currently in their third year of implementation of research-based instructional strategies aimed at accelerating student achievement in reading.

### **Adolescent Literacy Team**

The Adolescent Literacy Research and Development Team will complete its work in June 2009. The group's most recent focus has been writing. During the 2008-2009 school year, the Team continued its inquiry into writing and expanded its effort to include the elementary levels in order to have a K-12 articulated professional development effort for schools and teachers. This year's development work will culminate with the release of a sequence of professional development units for school teams focusing on improvement of instruction in writing as well as using writing in learning to read and in accessing information from various content areas. The Team's initial report, *Accelerating Adolescent Literacy*, was released in early 2008 and is currently posted to the Department's website.

### **Teacher Development Academies**

Over the past four school years, Iowa's school districts have had the opportunity to participate in TDAs aimed at increasing teacher skills and student achievement. The TDAs feature research-based content and are designed to support local school districts and AEAs in offering professional development based on the Iowa Professional Development Model. The five academies that focus on Reading include:

**Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction:** This academy engages upper elementary and middle school teams in a research-based classroom instructional model emphasizing reading engagement, reading comprehension, and conceptual learning in science and other content areas in order to improve reading achievement. To date, teams from 12 schools representing eight school districts have participated in CORI. At the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year, the state had three individuals who will be recognized trainers in June 2009 and an additional two to three individuals beginning the sequence to be trainers.

**Question-Answer Relationships:** This professional development opportunity is for middle and high school teams who have targeted improved student performance for staff development. The academy focuses on a question and answer strategy specifically designed to improve students' reading comprehension in the content areas. To date, 21 school teams from 19 school districts have participated in QAR; AEA personnel have participated with the teams as well.

**Second Chance Reading:** This program provides a specific course for struggling readers at the middle and high school levels. To date, 96 schools from 56 school districts have participated in SCR. Second Chance Reading has continued to expand throughout Iowa. During the 2008-2009 school year, Department and AEA-sponsored in-state trainers have continued to expand the program to more middle school and high school teachers. During the 2008-2009 school year, all the training for schools new to the Second Chance Reading program

was provided to the school teams by Iowa trainers. The focus of the Department's efforts with this program continues to be the development and maintenance of the SCR trainer network.

**Lexile:** The purpose of this academy is to support elementary school teams to build instructional activities with “lexiled” books that are tied to specific content. Teachers learn how to assess reading levels using “lexiled” books and how to select books in an appropriate reading range for students.

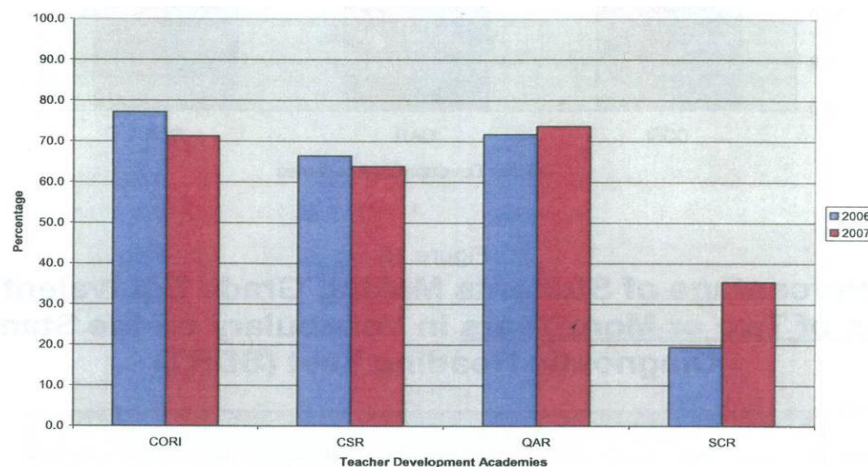
**Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM):** This model emphasizes reading, writing, listening, and comprehension as tools for thinking, learning, and sharing ideas. Elementary teachers learn to use pictures containing familiar objects, actions and scenes to draw out words from children's listening and speaking vocabularies and help students discover phonetic and structural principles present in those words. The next step is to then apply these skills in writing, again using pictures as one means of generating ideas to be expressed in writing.

## Results

**Teacher Development Academies:** Students participating in TDAs are administered the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the school year to measure growth. The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED) are also administered to students on an annual basis. In two of the four academies, the percentage of students scoring at the proficient level and above on the ITBS/ITED increased. The most significant increase in proficiency was realized for students participating in SCR (see Figure 12).

Figure 12

### The Percentage of Students Proficient in Reading Comprehension on the ITBS/ITED



For students participating in TDAs, achievement gains from the beginning to the end of the school year are also measured in terms of grade equivalents. Students demonstrated gains in both reading comprehension and vocabulary on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test. Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test grade equivalent gains of two or more years were achieved by at least 30 percent of the students during the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years in reading comprehension, and at least 25 percent of the students in vocabulary (see Figures 13 and 14). Additionally, grade equivalent growth of four or more years during 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 was achieved by at least 15 percent of the students in reading comprehension (see Figure 15), and at least 8 percent of the students in vocabulary.

Figure 13  
**Percentage of Students Making Grade Equivalent  
Gains of Two or More Years in Comprehension  
on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT)**

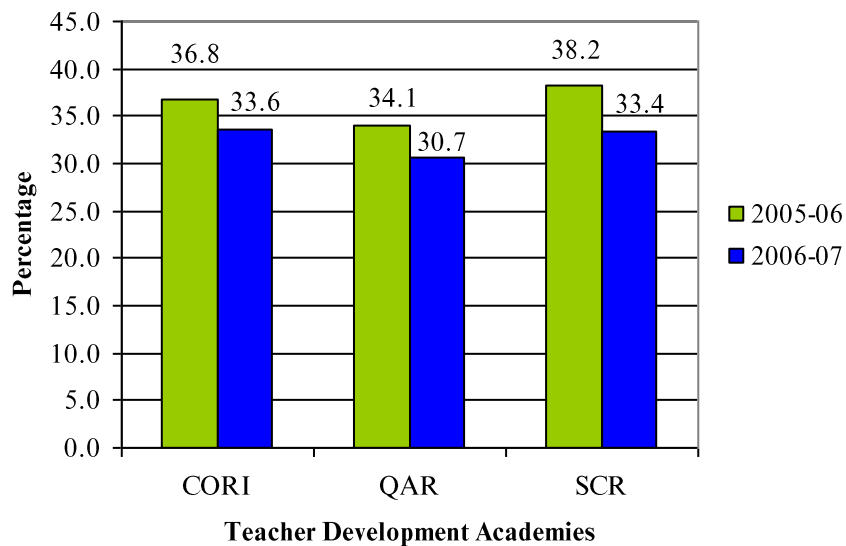


Figure 14

**Percentage of Students Making Grade Equivalent  
Gains of Two or More Years in Vocabulary  
on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT)**

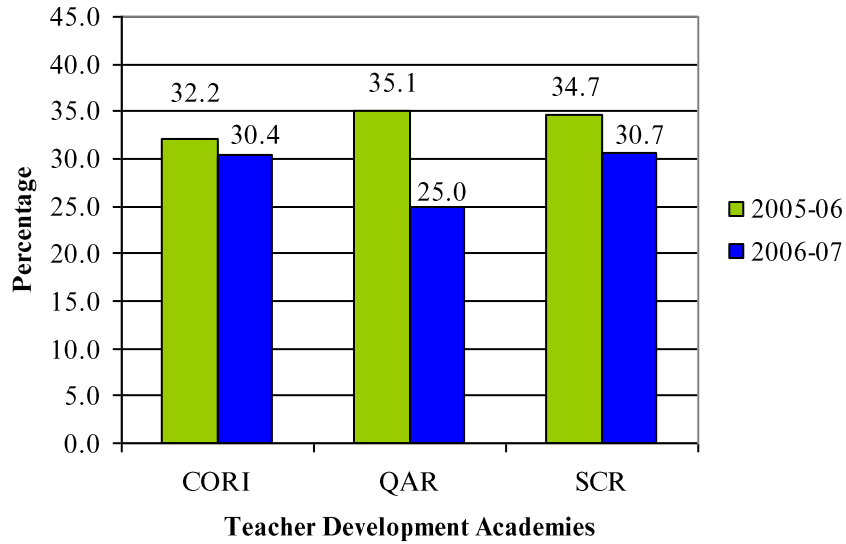
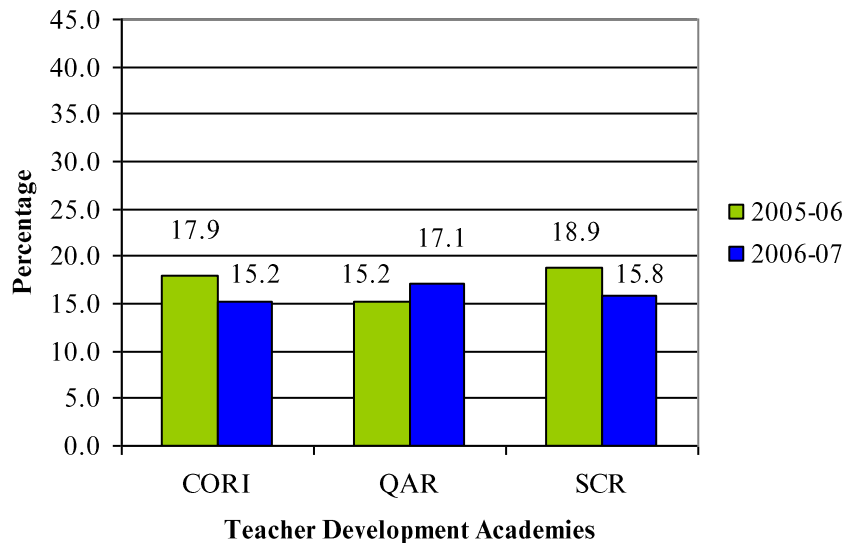


Figure 15

**Percentage of Students Making Grade Equivalent  
Gains of Four or More Years in Comprehension  
on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT)**



### **Reading First**

Of the 11,829 students participating in Iowa's Reading First effort, 34 percent are from minorities, 59 percent are economically disadvantaged, 14 percent are English Language Learners and 14 percent are receiving special education services. Each of these percentages is well above the state average of the respective groups.

- The percentage of students proficient in Reading First schools has increased in every area over the last three years;
- Over 90 percent of Reading First buildings have increased the percent of fourth graders proficient in reading comprehension on the ITBS;
- Nearly half of the Reading First buildings have increased the percent of fourth graders proficient in reading comprehension on the ITBS by more than 20 percent;
- None of the school buildings that have participated in Reading First for the last three years were on Iowa's 2006-2007 Title I Schools in Need of Assistance List;
- Reading First schools are closing the achievement gap on the majority of reading assessments; and
- Student performance at the fourth grade level in reading statewide (for all schools including Reading First schools) is likewise improving.

Information from the 2007-2008 school year for CORI and QAR has been collected and is ready for analysis. Final reports for each of these Academies will be available in the fall of 2009. Data for SCR, Lexile, and PWIM are currently being collected and will be analyzed for inclusion in the 2009-2010 reports.

### **On the Horizon**

Resources are being developed to help districts articulate a K-12 quality, comprehensive literacy program. The K-12 literacy articulation will include essential content, research-based instructional practices, effective assessment use and desired student outcomes. This articulation will include an alignment with the existing DE efforts.

Teacher Development Academies "Second Chance Reading" and "Question-Answer Response" will each have a set of in-state trainers ready to deliver professional development to LEA staffs by the end of the summer. This cadre of trainers will eliminate the need for national trainers.

The Adolescent Literacy Research and Development Team and Statewide Reading Team will be combined for the 2009-2010 school into a Statewide Literacy Team. The focus of the reorganized team will be integrating reading and writing; the development of resources to support districts in articulating a high-quality comprehensive literacy program using research-based models and practices that aligns with the Iowa Core Curriculum; and continued support to the Teacher Development Academies, writing development, and the Picture Word Inductive Model.

## **Science**

### **Purpose**

For science, the Department has developed a K-12 professional development sequence for AEA and school district personnel referred to as Every Learner Inquires (ELI). In 2008-2009, the effort entered its third year of a three-year sequence designed to accelerate student achievement in science. The goals for the effort are:

**Student Learning Goal:** Improve science learning for all K-12 students in the state.

**Teacher Learning Goal:** Build teacher leadership and content expertise within the system.

**Teacher Practice Goal:** Implement inquiry-based instruction.

**Organizational Goal:** Establish a structure that sustains the implementation of Every Learner Inquires.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

ELI provided AEA-based teams with a four-day summer institute followed by four full-day professional development workshops distributed across the 2008-2009 school year. The focus this year was curriculum topic study, an approach for aligning science standards with instructional practice and aligning with the Iowa Core Curriculum. The goals for Year 3 focused on helping participants with their:

- Understanding of how the learning cycle relates to the essential features of classroom inquiry;
- Ability to adapt curriculum to the learning cycle;
- Ability to use curriculum topic study to plan learning cycles;
- Ability to differentiate instruction, and
- Ability to evaluate student work products from inquiry-based lessons.



## **Results**

The following points summarize the highlights of the independent evaluator's (Learning Point Associates) report.

### **Professional Development**

- *Workshop Quality.* ELI survey respondents reported the fall workshops were of high quality, and the September workshop received the highest ratings of all. Suggestions to improve the workshops focused on session logistics, including technical issues and the use of time.
- *Workshop Relevance.* Participants in the fall workshops reported the sessions were useful and relevant for their work. Respondents appreciated receiving and working on materials and strategies for the classroom, and several suggested incorporating more time to meet with teams regarding the scale-up. Respondents also reported needing more assistance in integrating what they learned into classroom instruction.
- *Teacher Learning.* Participants rated the impact of the fall workshops on understanding how the learning cycle relates to inquiry, ability to adapt curriculum to the learning cycle, ability to use curriculum topic study in planning instruction, ability to differentiate instruction, and ability to evaluate student work products. Teachers generally indicated that the workshops positively impacted their learning to at least a moderate extent, with the highest percentage of positive responses in September. When identifying areas in which they need more assistance, several teachers mentioned the integration of concepts, CTS, the learning cycle, probes, and differentiation.

### **Progress With Scale-Up**

- *Goals.* The five AEA leaders who shared goals for the scale-up all reported similar objectives: introduce teachers to inquiry and prepare them to implement inquiry in classrooms.
- *Plans.* Articulations of the plans vary greatly among AEAs, with some leaders describing specific participants and activities for the current school year, and others having only a loose idea of what the scale-up will entail.
- *Implementation.* Three of the six teams were currently implementing their scale-up plans, conducting at least one scale-up session with their intended participants. Two teams were in the process of preparing to implement the scale-up in the spring of 2009, and the leader of one team reports there is not a fully articulated plan for the scale-up.
- *Breadth.* Three teams offer region-wide professional development activities, whereas two teams report a more limited, school-based approach. One of the former three teams also invited two teachers to join its team for the IDE-sponsored workshops.
- *Targeted Participants.* Participants are targeted in different ways. Most of the AEA workshops are open to all interested teachers, even on an individual basis. In three AEAs, schools and districts have made participation with the



ELI professional development mandatory for their science teachers. Five AEAs are preparing teachers already familiar with inquiry to serve as local school-based trainers of other teachers.

- *Professional Development Format.* For the most part, the scheduling of professional development activities reflects the workshop model currently being offered by IDE. Workshop activities emphasize small-group, collaborative formats to a greater extent than lecture formats. Similarly, AEA teams generally plan to use a lesson study approach during workshops, where teachers will reflect on and analyze an inquiry-based lesson with fellow teachers. Four AEAs also reported observing classrooms, and staff from two reported also modeling lessons.
- *Support for the Scale-Up.* Overall, AEA teams are not working together in the scale-up. Although IDE provides the ELI workshops and related materials, two AEA leaders reported that IDE has not been involved with the scale-up efforts. These two leaders sought more guidance from IDE regarding the scale-up, such as a rubric for implementation.
- *Successes.* The three teams that have begun implementing their plans cite the positive feedback from their participants and their adoption of inquiry practices as the hallmarks of success. Two teams also report that their program is a success based on the large base of participants.
- *Challenges.* When asked about challenges to achieving the program's goals, AEA leaders and workshop participants frequently mentioned a lack time for planning and implementing inquiry and the scale-up. The other most prevalent challenge was confusion about how to implement the scale-up and the lack of clear guidance. Finally, several AEA leaders and participants indicated that schools and teachers are reluctant to launch an initiative for inquiry while struggling to implement the Iowa Core Curriculum.

### **On the Horizon**

Planning is underway for a fourth year of development for the ELI participants. The additional year will provide for extended study of inquiry-based learning and the learning cycle approach, development and integration of ELI and the Iowa Core Curriculum, specifically focusing on characteristics of effective instruction, formative assessment, and the essential concepts and skills of science. Of course the result of the independent evaluation will also factor into the plans for the fourth year.

## **Mathematics**

### **Purpose**

The Department's professional development efforts in mathematics are organized around Every Student Counts (ESC) and the Teacher Development Academy (TDA) – Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI). The goal is to develop the capacity to provide quality professional development and technical assistance to schools focusing on improving student achievement in mathematics.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

Every Student Counts (ESC) is completing its fifth year of professional development for AEA teams. The 2008-2009 year's focus has been formative assessment - assessment for learning at all three levels of training. The effort continued to emphasize teaching for understanding, using problem-based instructional tasks and meaningful distributed practice as vehicles for improving instruction. Beginning in August of 2006, all AEAs began offering ESC professional development. The work of the AEA teams has expanded to include more schools and more teachers during the 2008-2009 school year.

Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) continued to be offered to new school teams as well as school teams in their second year of development during the 2008-2009 school year. Because of demand from schools, the Department will again provide CGI training to additional school teams. The Department continued to provide additional support to a cadre of individuals as potential in-state CGI trainers. By August 2009, Iowa should have a group of 55 educators recognized as certified CGI trainers.

### **Results**

Information from schools, students, and teachers participating in ESC is currently being validated and analyzed by Department and AEA staff. Assessment and instructional strategy implementation data will be analyzed over the summer with a final report expected in late fall, 2009.

Twenty-three schools representing eleven districts are currently participating in the CGI professional development sequence. Participants include 55 teachers, 15 AEA personnel, 15 central office/principals, and 54 trainers. These persons participated in training to improve mathematical performance of students, experienced job embedded learning, and collected and participated in evaluation and documentation of learning. Information from participants and students regarding the effectiveness of the training, the implementation of instructional strategies, and student data and experiences are currently being collected. A final report can be expected in October 2009. Additionally, information is currently being analyzed to create CGI probes for use in the instructional decision making process for K-5 classrooms.

### **On the Horizon**

The demand for school participation in the CGI professional development sequence is increasing. The development of 75 in-state individuals as certified trainers will allow the AEAs and Department to more effectively respond to elementary school needs in mathematics. At the same time, the number of schools involved with ESC has increased. This circumstance has prompted the Department to conduct a thorough review of each effort. One part of the review will investigate whether to engage in CGI for middle schools. The review process will combine the exploration of the CGI middle school program with the Every Student Counts professional

development sequence. Completion of this review process will provide the information needed to make an informed decision as to how to best meet school needs in mathematics with effective and timely professional development to school teams.

## **Efforts Crossing Content Areas**

### **Authentic Intellectual Work**

#### **Purpose**

Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) is a professional development program designed to prepare students to successfully respond to the challenges of the modern world and workplace. This is accomplished by using a framework of criteria for teaching that:

- Maximizes expectations of intellectual challenge for all students;
- Increases student interest in academic work;
- Supports teachers' taking time to teach for in-depth understanding, rather than superficial coverage of materials;
- Provides a common conception of student intellectual work that promotes professional community among teachers of different grade levels and subjects; and
- Equips students to address the complex intellectual challenges of work, civic participation, and managing personal affairs in the contemporary world.

#### **Activities and Accomplishments**

Twenty-one schools representing nineteen school districts participated in the 2008-2009 AIW professional development sequence. The twenty-one schools included the nine schools that participated in the initial training in 2007-2008 and twelve new schools, providing a total of 351 participants. The participating schools represented six AEAs. Each school was represented by a team of teachers, their principal and/or central office personnel, and an individual from the AEA. The teams participated in a sequence of collective professional development and received monthly support from a liaison (AEA or Department individual training to be an AIW coach) and regular support and training from an authorized AIW coach. Additionally, the Department supported the development of liaisons and additional coaches. During this second year of AIW, an evaluation plan was developed and executed. Data is still being gathered and analyzed for a preliminary report due in September, 2009. The segment of the evaluation plan dealing with student achievement data will be ready for the 2009-2010 school year.

## **Results**

There are two very compelling results to date:

- The Department is receiving requests for participation from districts at a rate much higher than the system can effectively support, so unfortunately some schools will need to be turned away; and
- All schools currently participating have plans to expand the program to more of their staff with several schools already moving forward with plans for all staff participation.

## **On the Horizon**

With the support of the AEAs, the Department is accelerating the development of liaisons and coaches for AIW. The current plan projects that Iowa will have 60 coaches by the end of the 2012-2013 school year. New schools will be added next year and at this point all 21 schools currently participating will continue with expanded teams.

## **Formative Assessment**

### **Purpose**

In support of improving instruction of the Iowa Core Curriculum, the DE has pursued the area of formative assessment for improving teacher decisions regarding student learning and instruction. The goals for district and school collaborative teams of teachers and administrators are to:

- Learn about and implement the process of formative assessment and the essential elements of the process;
- Learn about and employ criteria for selecting quality tools and protocols for the formative assessment process; and
- Develop an understanding of the theoretical and research base for formative assessment, and the improved results for students that can be achieved when efforts focus on assessment for learning (formative) as opposed to assessment of learning (summative).

Additionally, the effort will prepare an in-state cadre of individuals as trainers and technical assistance providers.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

During the 2008-2009 school year, the DE capitalized on the expertise of Margaret Heritage, Assistant Director - Professional Development at the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA, for the area of formative assessment. Dr Heritage, along with Kim Malenoski, Lead Consultant - Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory, and Anne Tweed, Associate Director, North Central Comprehensive Center, provided professional development to a team of individuals representing the DE consultants, higher education, and the leads of the DE's instructional improvement initiatives.

## **Results**

This foundational information was the springboard for organizing a statewide Work Group focusing on formative assessment as a part of implementing the Iowa Core Curriculum. The Work Group is co-chaired by a DE consultant and a professor from the University of Iowa. The group's membership represents expertise in the area of formative assessment and includes representation from nationally-recognized experts, school districts (teachers and administrators), area education agencies, higher education, and the DE.

The most significant effort of the Work Group, an effort that is already underway, is the development of a professional development sequence for school teams as well as the preparation of a training sequence to develop in-state expert trainers and technical assistance providers. The professional development sequence for school teams will be launched in August 2009 with ongoing training and support provided throughout the 2009-2010 school year.

## **On the Horizon**

During the 2009-2010 school year, the aforementioned training effort will focus on school teams with AEA partners. Participation will be targeted to a limited number of school teams in order to pilot the professional development sequence. Once the initial training, tools and protocols, and strategies are evaluated, the training will be extended to more districts and schools. The extension of the effort will be accomplished by identifying and training individuals from the initial training sequence for preparation as trainers and technical assistance providers.

**INITIATIVE 2: Expand high school reform efforts utilizing a network of AEA trainers to help districts implement the Iowa Core Curriculum and address the needs of struggling learners.**

## **Purpose**

The purpose for the Iowa Core Curriculum is to ensure the success of each and every student by providing a world-class curriculum. The Core Curriculum is designed to improve achievement of all students, preparing them for the world of work and lifelong learning.

## **Activities and Accomplishments**

The DE's support has focused on the following:

- The development of the Iowa Core Curriculum;
- The development of a statewide Network to support the implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum;
- The development and delivery of six leadership modules orienting local school leadership teams to the Iowa Core Curriculum;
- Funding and additional technical assistance for implementation of Iowa Core Curriculum;
- ongoing information/material development and dissemination; and
- Development of infrastructures for ongoing support.

### **Development of the Iowa Core Curriculum**

The final pieces of a K-12 Iowa Core Curriculum in literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills were endorsed by the State Board in February 2009. In May 2008, the Governor signed Senate File 2216 into law. This legislation requires public schools and accredited nonpublic schools to fully implement the 9-12 Iowa Core Curriculum by July 1, 2012, and the K-8 Iowa Core Curriculum by 2014-2015.

### **Development of a statewide Network**

The DE, in collaboration with the AEAs, has established a network of trainers to work directly with schools to insure the full implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum. Each area education agency (AEA) identified a team, ranging in size from two to 11 members, to oversee the implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum. The Network has met monthly since July 2008 to deliver training and facilitation, and provide protocols, tools, and ongoing support to LEAs. In support of the Network, work teams focused on alignment; characteristics of effective instruction; 21<sup>st</sup> century skills; leadership; and developing processes and materials needed to improve local practices in content, instruction, and assessment.

The DE has integrated the requirements of the core curriculum and career plans for every eighth grader. These plans require each high school student to graduate having completed four years of English/language arts, three years of social studies, three years of science, and three years of mathematics. Using national and state guidelines, effective practice research and input from AEA and LEA staff, technical assistance has been provided to enable districts to successfully implement the eighth grade plan.

### **Development and delivery of six leadership modules**

Each AEA Network team has delivered a series of six modules to school leadership teams throughout the past year. Participants were asked to critique the modules through an online survey. Data gathered shows that more than 3000 educators participated in these modules, including representation from all but six Iowa school districts. Overall, the modules received high ratings from those surveyed.

- Eighty-four percent rated the content as helpful, effective, and relevant;
- Ninety percent indicated the materials facilitated learning and were well organized; and
- Eighty-five percent reported that their trainers were knowledgeable and competent.



The following table briefly identifies the objective addressed in each module.

Table 2  
**Leadership Module Objectives**

<b>Leadership Module Objectives</b>	<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Module 4</b>	<b>Module 5</b>	<b>Module 6</b>
<i><b>Purposes, Requirements, Intent, Rationale, Implications for Districts</b></i>	✖	✖	✖			
<i><b>Leadership Behaviors to Support/Sustain Core</b></i>	✖	✖	✖	✖		
<i><b>Roles and Responsibilities of Leaders</b></i>	✖		✖			
<i><b>Characteristics of Effective Instruction</b></i>		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖
<i><b>Essential Concepts and Skills - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills</b></i>				✖	✖	✖
<i><b>Alignment Processes – Definitions</b></i>		✖	✖	✖		
<i><b>Implementation Plan and Use Self-study</b></i>			✖	✖	✖	✖

### **Funding and technical assistance for implementation**

The legislature allocated \$8.5 million to districts for the implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum. This funding allowed districts to send representatives to training opportunities and to enhance district professional development in the content areas of literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

The DE also added teachers from 12 schools to the pilot project in Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) during the 2008-2009 school year. Based upon analysis of adults working with knowledge, AIW is defined by three criteria – construction of knowledge; through disciplined inquiry; to produce discourse, products, and performances that have value beyond school. Teachers studied assessment tasks, instruction, and student work they had collected to find opportunities to increase the intellectual rigor and student relevance content and instruction.

### **Information/material development and dissemination**

In collaboration with the School Administrators of Iowa, the DE hosted the Fifth Annual Iowa High School Summit in December 2008. Sessions featured educators from Iowa high schools and middle schools describing successful programs and professional development efforts that they have worked to implement.

In addition to the network being established to support full implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum, the DE is continuing to work with the AEAs to support trainers who can assist high schools in their efforts to renew their preparation of students for postsecondary learning and employment. This group met four times during the year to review current training for high school teams in each AEA and support each other in common efforts.

## **Results**

The activities and accomplishments described above are in implementation stage; thus, any impact on student participation in rigorous, relevant coursework that prepares them for postsecondary learning and employment cannot be expected for a number of years. There are, however, indicators that can be used as baseline measures to determine the ultimate effect of DE activities. These measures include: graduation rates, percentage of students intending to pursue postsecondary education, percentage of students scoring above 20 on the ACT, percentage of students completing a core curriculum, and student satisfaction with their high school preparation.

The graduation rate for the total population has been relatively stable since 2000 (90.5 percent in 2007), however, trend lines vary for different ethnic subgroups. Districts reported that 84.2 percent of their graduates planned to pursue postsecondary education after high school. The trend line for percentage of students scoring 20 or higher on the ACT is stable (72.8 percent in 2008).

## **On the Horizon**

The DE is planning a number of new initiatives related to high schools:

- The DE will continue collaborating with the AEAs to help schools fully implement the Iowa Core Curriculum. Training will continue and the focus will be on providing school leaders with the skills and tools needed for the alignment of local curriculum to the Iowa Core Curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices;
- Improved formative assessment practices are being integrated into professional development related to the Iowa Core Curriculum. Nine modules on formative assessment will be delivered to AEA teams during the upcoming year;
- Units supporting the Iowa Core Curriculum have been developed in K-12 literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. The Department is now framing these units in professional development to most effectively support teacher learning;
- Up to eighteen schools will be added to the Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) pilot. Additional teachers from each of the 21 schools that began implementing AIW as their instructional framework in 2007 and 2008 will be added; and
- Iowa Testing Programs is continuing to develop additional high quality assessments, both formative and summative, that align with the Iowa Core Curriculum.



### **INITIATIVE 3: Improve the quality of teaching and school leadership**

#### **Teaching**

##### **Purpose**

The Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program was established in 2001. The intent of the program is to acknowledge that outstanding teachers are a key component in student success. The program's goals are to enhance student achievement by redesigning teachers' professional development to improve instruction, provide mentoring and induction structures to attract and retain high performing teachers, develop teacher evaluation processes to build teacher capacity, and pilot a project to determine the efficacy of team-based variable pay. The design of the Teacher Quality Program is based on the principle that investing in the professional growth of teachers will result in improved instruction, and improved instruction will yield gains in student achievement.

##### **Activities and Accomplishments**

##### **Teacher Quality Committees**

The DE has served a critical role helping local districts implement the new requirement to establish Teacher Quality Committees (TQCs) in each local district to make decisions and recommendations pertaining to professional development. In August 2008, four regional workshops were offered to prepare TQCs. These sessions were attended by 1,283 school administrators and teachers representing 229 school districts. Districts unable to attend were provided with a DVD of the session. In March, a similar session was provided to AEAs. Every AEA participated. The DE continues to support TQCs by working with them as questions arise.

##### **Professional Development Model and Content Network**

The Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM) provides guidance to local districts as they design and implement district and school-wide professional development. The technical guide for the IPDM has been updated and posted to the DE website.

The DE Content Network website was designed to help school districts identify content for implementing the district career development plan, and now the required building plans. The Content Network website organizes research in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science. This site does not include recommendations for specific strategies, programs, products, or trainers to deliver content based on the findings. Rather, it provides resources for districts to identify possible instructional strategies or instructional model matches to their student needs. When compared with their data, districts should be able to match the area of need to potential professional development content options. Summaries of the available and reported research have been developed and are ready for final edit and posting to the Content Network website.

### **Teacher Development Academies**

The Teacher Development Academies (TDAs) are a series of professional development opportunities available to teams from public schools. Each TDA features research based content and is designed to support local school districts and AEAs in offering professional development that is grounded in research and based on the Iowa Professional Development Model.

The target audience for the TDAs is local school teams that include the teachers, principals, and central office personnel from Iowa's school districts and AEA consultants who participate with a specific school team.

The purposes of the TDAs are:

- To increase student achievement through quality professional development;
- To improve local district access to qualified trainers in high demand content areas (reading, mathematics and science);
- To increase the number of teachers and consultants with expertise in specific academic content areas and skills in delivering professional development opportunities;
- To support and complement existing Teacher Quality Program efforts by adding to the pool of available trainers in Iowa; and
- To support LEA implementation of District Career Development Plans.

The DE provided the following Academies during the 2008-2009 school year: Second Chance Reading (SCR), Concept Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI), Question Answer Relationships (QAR), Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM), Lexile, and Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW). Each academy provided from seven to eight days of training distributed through the summer of 2008 and the 2008-2009 school year.

Expert external trainers for the Academies work with teachers and their administrators to develop school-based collaborative learning teams, design formative data collection for student performance and implementation, and assist with analysis strategies for both formative and summative data. Web-based procedures for reporting student results are in place. As part of the ongoing effort to build statewide capacity to provide local districts with quality professional development, five of the Academies (CORI, CGI, AIW, SCR, QAR) are preparing select participants to serve as in-state trainers. These individuals meet rigorous selection criteria and engage in additional intensive training. Networks are in place to support the ongoing development of the trainers. In-state trainers are now in place and prepared to provide training and technical assistance for these Academies.

The content offered in the TDAs is selected to assist local districts in providing training to implement District Career Development Plans. The content is determined by analyzing statewide student achievement data and District Career Development Plans across the state. More information about Teacher Development Academies and results can be found under Goal 2, Initiative 1, in this document.

### **The Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program**

The Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program was first implemented in the 2001-2002 school year. The purposes of teacher mentoring and induction are:

- To recruit and retain teachers new to the profession;
- To ensure high quality teachers in the classroom;
- To promote excellence in teaching;
- To enhance student achievement;
- To build a supportive environment within school districts;
- To increase the retention of promising beginning educators;
- To promote the personal and professional well being of classroom educators; and
- To support continuous improvement.

A quality educator induction program:

- Explains district, building, departmental, and grade level policies, procedures, and expectations;
- Establishes a balance between entering an established community with conventional practices and developing new kinds of teaching that advance student learning; and
- Promotes continued professional learning through reflective practice and professional conversations about teaching.

A variety of support mechanisms are in place to provide technical assistance to local education agencies and AEAs with the Mentoring and Induction program:

- **Mentoring and Induction Institute:** The Mentoring and Induction Institute offers the Mildred Middleton Crystal Key Award for Outstanding Mentoring and for Outstanding Leadership in a Mentoring and Induction program in the state of Iowa. The award is provided by the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA) and is offered annually;
- **Technical Assistance Guide** to assist AEAs and LEAs revise their existing programs. It is located at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/481/1192/>;
- **The Iowa Mentoring and Induction Network:** The Iowa Mentoring and Induction Network provides information and technical assistance on topics such as licensure issues for new teachers, system support, Iowa mentoring and induction models, the Iowa Teaching Standards, and mentoring resources. Members represent LEAs, AEAs, the DE, higher education, and ISEA; and

- **Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant (TQE):** In 2005, the DE was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Education in the amount of \$6.3 million dollars over three years. This grant is being used to increase the effectiveness of teacher education programs for teacher candidates and will also assist in collecting data on first and second year teachers in Iowa in the future (see “On-line Survey”). The grant supports, in part, the technical assistance and related activities for Mentoring and Induction.

## **Results**

In January of 2008, the DE conducted a survey to determine the current status of the Teacher Quality Committees (TQCs) in order to guide the development of technical assistance. This survey was conducted in collaboration with School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) and the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA). Some preliminary findings show that 94.4 percent of respondents agreed that their TQC meetings have been collaborative and productive. Respondents were also asked if their TQC contributed to ensuring that high quality professional development was delivered in their school district. Over 80 percent of the respondents agreed with that statement.

One hundred percent of the public school districts and AEAs in Iowa have a Mentoring and Induction plan that has been approved by the DE. The LEA plans are amendments to each local Comprehensive School Improvement Plan.

See the chart below for information about the retention of new educators prior to implementation of the teacher quality legislation in July of 2001. Eighty-seven percent of the teachers who were first year teachers in 2000-2001 returned to teach the next year (see table below). The percent of teachers returning to teach a second year is shaded in dark gray. Note that there has been considerable variability in the number of first year teachers during the last six years.

Table 3  
**Iowa Teacher Retention Public School District First Year  
Teacher Retention 1996-1997 to 2002-2007**

Number 1st Year	Public School Teachers	Teachers Returning in 1997- 1998	Teachers Returning in 1998- 1999	Teachers Returning in 1999- 2000	Teachers Returning in 2000- 2001	Teachers Returning in 2001- 2002	Teachers Returning in 2002- 2003	Teachers Returning in 2003- 2004	Teachers Returning in 2004- 2005	Teachers Returning in 2005- 2006	Teachers Returning in 2006-2007
1199	1094 (91.5%)	981 (81.8%)	894 (74.6%)	849 (70.8%)	789 (65.8%)	750 (62.6%)	725 (60.5%)	699 (58.3%)	674 (56.2%)	657 (54.8%)	
1347		1212 (90.0%)	1093 (81.1%)	1004 (74.5%)	942 (69.9%)	914 (67.9%)	860 (63.8%)	825 (61.2%)	806 (59.8%)	786 (58.4%)	
1418			1268 (89.4%)	1145 (80.7%)	1052 (74.2%)	1008 (71.1%)	969 (68.3%)	921 (65.0%)	873 (61.6%)	862 (60.8%)	
1883				1684 (89.4%)	1548 (82.2%)	1439 (76.4%)	1371 (72.8%)	1302 (69.1%)	1242 (66.0%)	1208 (64.2%)	
1810					1574 (87.0%)	1424 (78.7%)	1339 (74.0%)	1273 (70.3%)	1221 (67.5%)	1181 (65.2%)	
1614						1407 (87.2%)	1285 (79.6%)	1216 (75.3%)	1162 (72.0%)	1100 (68.2%)	
1269							1131 (89.1%)	1033 (81.4%)	975 (76.8%)	924 (72.8%)	
1432								1295 (90.4%)	1200 (83.8%)	1139 (79.5%)	
1512									1391 (92.0%)	1262 (83.5%)	
1591										1451 (91.2%)	

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, Development and Evaluation, Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) Staff Files.

\*Data does not include teachers leaving Iowa to teach in other states.

\*\*Mentoring and induction was first offered in 2001-2002.

\*\*\*All beginning teachers were supported by mentoring and induction in 2002-2003.

### On the Horizon

The DE continues to help local districts in the implementation of **Teacher Quality Committees**. All school districts will receive money to infuse and implement the Iowa Core Curriculum. The DE will be offering feedback to AEAs on their agency professional development plans and will be providing assistance as their TQCs become fully operational.

The **Content Network** website is a work in progress as the network teams continue to review research. If a school district or school has an interest in an instructional strategy in reading, mathematics, or science and they cannot find it on the Content Network website, they can contact the DE to request more information. The DE will try to find research on the strategy, if possible, and give it to the district and post it on the website.

The goal of the **Teacher Development Academies** is to have a network of trainers across the state so that each AEA offers the training for the schools within their area. New TDAs will be developed as the DE finds research-based instructional approaches that have strong academic gains for students during implementation.

A Model Framework for local districts to use to improve the quality of their **Mentoring and Induction** programs has been developed and is currently being piloted in AEA 13 districts. The DE is serving as a partner with ISEA in this effort. The model for first year teachers called Journey to Excellence” was available in 2008. The model for second year teachers was developed in 2008 and piloted during the 2008-2009 school year.

Under this framework, an effective mentoring program in Iowa should include the following key components:

- A clear focus on effective teaching using the Iowa Teaching Standards;
- Preparation of experienced educators to serve as mentors;
- Learning opportunities for mentors to use commensurate with the growth of beginning educators;
- Meaningful formative assessment of the performance of beginning educators;
- Time and support for the mentor and beginning educator to work together;
- Understanding the relationship between Iowa Teaching Standards and the comprehensive evaluation;
- Establishing the firewall between mentor and evaluator and acknowledging confidential relationships between the beginning educator and mentor; and
- Annual verification of program completion.

An on-line survey for all first and second year teachers, for administrators who have new educators in their buildings, and for new teachers to indicate how well they were prepared by their Iowa teacher preparation institutions was conducted in the spring of 2008. Survey results were available in the fall of 2008.

The exploration of a license for Teacher Leaders was conducted in 2008. This license would:

- Acknowledge and recognize teacher leaders;
- Support teachers in developing capacities for leadership ;
- Provide multiple opportunities/paths for professional growth and career advancement;
- Deepen understanding of the teaching profession;
- Empower teachers as collaborators and change agents for educational reform;
- Initiate new thinking and generate research; and
- Retain quality educators.



## **School Leadership**

### **Purpose**

Educational research shows that school administrators can have a considerable influence on school improvement efforts and student achievement. The message is consistent: school leaders are critical to effective school improvement efforts, and the strong instructional leadership of superintendents and principals has significant impact on increasing the level of student achievement. The DE supports work with the School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) and the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) to develop the leadership skills of administrators in Iowa.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

#### **Principal Leadership Academy**

With the assistance from the Wallace Foundation Grant, the DE, SAI, IASB, and the institutions of higher education, the Principal Leadership Academy continues to shape quality school leaders for Iowa schools. In June 2008, two cohorts of principals met to build a commitment and course of action for transforming the leadership behaviors in the context of building and district improvement plans for the 2008-2009 school year. A mid-year institute was held in November 2008 with the participants to examine individual goal plans, expand on the skills needed for data use, and recapture the energy and commitment of leadership work. The academy allowed participants an opportunity to interact with and learn from many national leadership experts like: Dr. Richard Elmore, Dr. Pam Robbins, Dr. Alan Zimmerman, and Dr. Dean Fink.

#### **Superintendent Network**

During the 2008-2009 school year, representatives from the AEAs, school superintendents, and representatives of the DE, SAI, IASB, and the Wallace Foundation Grant continued to build an understanding of the Superintendents' Network: The Work of Instructional Rounds. The network model, developed by Dr. Richard Elmore of Harvard University, allows superintendents to increase their leadership capacity for improved instruction. The networks provide superintendents a safe space to grapple with difficult issues related to improving teaching and learning. During the 2008-2009 school year, the network participants were provided opportunities to experience network rounds in a high school and establish the practice with a network of superintendents within their AEA.

#### **Administrator Mentoring and Induction**

In 2006, the Iowa Legislature established and funded administrator mentoring and induction. SAI, in collaboration with the DE, developed the program.

The purposes of the administrator mentoring and induction are:

- To provide support, professional development, and access to a variety of information sources critical to a beginning administrator's success as a leader of student achievement;

- To develop competency in Iowa Standards for School Leaders. The activities and accomplishments to date include;
- Assignment of a quality mentor who is in a comparable position and geographic proximity (170 administrator mentor-mentee pairs participated in 2008-2009);
- One day of mentor training and on-going recommendations for timely topics to be discussed during the monthly face-to-face meetings of the mentor-mentee teams;
- A one-day summer New Administrator Institute;
- Two statewide mentor-mentee meetings to provide information and networking opportunities;
- The Survival Guide for School Administrators posted on the SAI website to provide resources needed by new administrators; and
- Program evaluation to assess program effectiveness.

### **Iowa Core Curriculum Leadership Modules**

The intent of the Iowa Core Curriculum Leadership Modules was to build on the specific leadership behaviors that can support and sustain the implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum, develop an understanding of the Characteristics of Effective Instruction and the Alignment Processes, and build an understanding of the implementation plan framework. Leadership teams, which included school administrators and teachers, participated in six module trainings within their AEA.

### **Evaluation of Administrators**

During the 2008-2009 school year, the DE, SAI, and the Wallace Foundation Grant continued to provide training to school administrators in an effort to prepare participants to evaluate administrators based on the six leadership standards. The training provides administrator evaluators with the knowledge and skills necessary to make the appropriate licensure decisions and to conduct performance reviews of the administrators based on the leadership standards.

### **Evaluation of Teachers**

The Evaluation of Teachers training continues to be provided across the state to those participants who want to obtain their initial evaluator's license (Level I) or renew their evaluator license (Level II). During Level I training the participants engage with theory behind best practices of teacher evaluation, the QIC-Decide model, attributes of quality instruction in the classroom that support the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria, and conferencing in a professional growth environment. In November 2008, the DE and SAI partnered to provide an online version of Level I training for experienced administrators coming to Iowa. The Level II training emphasizes the conferencing skills for pre- and post-observations and individual teacher professional development plans, intensive assistance plans, and evaluating Iowa Teaching Standard 2 – Content Knowledge.



## **Results**

Principals participating in the Iowa Leadership Academy indicated that experience provided opportunities for them to gain craft knowledge and skills that enhance their ability to advance their school's learning goals (99 percent); to develop a leadership plan of action that will advance their school's plan of action (99 percent); and to participate in networking, collaboration and coaching (99 percent).

Evaluations conducted after the various Administrator Mentoring and Induction training activities indicated a high degree of satisfaction. Participants identified the time to network, job-alike grouping for reflection and discussion, and concrete strategies to implement as the most beneficial aspect of the trainings.

As part of the evaluation design for the Administrator Mentoring and Induction program participants were asked to complete surveys three times during the school year. The program evaluation final report stated as a conclusion: "the mentoring and induction relationship is important in the increased confidence level of the administrator in their position whether it be their first principalship, a new superintendent or director."

Information gathered through the Iowa Core Curriculum Rollout and Technical Assistant Evaluation indicated that 450 public and non-public districts participated in the Leadership Modules. 43.3 percent of the participants were administrators, and 55 percent of the participants were teachers. 71.9 percent of the participants indicated that overall the training was good to excellent. 89.5 percent of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the content was relevant to their work with the implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum. 78 percent of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the sessions contained sufficient information that enabled them to use the learning back in their district.

A survey of evaluator training participants indicated changes in the way they work with teaching and/or administrative staff as a result of their most recent training – focus on teaching/leadership standards and conversations/coaching opportunities. These participants also indicated that they would like more support when dealing with marginal staff members and blending of coaching and evaluation.

## **On the Horizon**

An Evaluator Renewal Advisory Committee met for the first time in March 2009 to begin planning for future evaluator training opportunities beyond the Level II training. The committee has representation from principals, superintendents, AEAs, SAI, the DE, IASB, IHEs, and the Wallace Foundation Grant. The committee will be meeting throughout the summer of 2009 to draft a proposal that can be shared with the DE by the fall of 2009.

The Wallace Foundation Grant continues to support leadership endeavors, like Iowa Leadership Academy Principal Center, the Superintendent Network, and Administrator Mentoring and Induction.

Process changes have been implemented to facilitate a more timely completion of the mentor/mentee matches. SAI is planning to have matches completed and operational by mid-July.

The various partners on the Iowa Leadership Academy continue to review the data and make necessary adjustments for future academy endeavors.

- The AEAs will continue to provide broad-based support for the Superintendent Network and the use of Instructional Rounds. Dr. Richard Elmore and his team from Harvard will engage periodically with the networks as they work to sustain their efforts and continually build their understanding of Instructional Rounds; and
- A sub-committee is currently reviewing the design of the Principal Center's summer institute. During the Principal Center's summer institute in June 2009, school leaders will have an opportunity to listen to and engage with national experts like Kati Haycock (President of the Education Trust), Lisa Carter (Presenter and consultant – *Total Instructional Alignment*), and Todd Whitaker (Professor of Educational Leadership at Indiana State University).

#### **INITIATIVE 4: Improve the quality of data and information.**

##### **Unified Education Data System**

###### **Purpose**

The Iowa Department of Education (IDE) recognizes the need and the importance of a comprehensive, accurate, and timely statewide longitudinal data system. IDE is planning to implement several key activities with the purpose of realizing a system-wide vision that:

- Generates a unified infrastructure for educational data;
- Establishes interconnectivity between entities for analysis and planning; and
- Develops a PK-16 system for tracking individuals throughout their education and into the workforce.

###### **Activities and Accomplishments/Background**

The IDE will receive an \$8.8 million Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to help bolster this effort. IDE has worked over the past few years to enhance its statewide education data system funneling \$4 million of state and federal funds into the project and these IES funds will boost further development.

With this grant, the state will enhance its capabilities to provide consistent, reliable, and accurate quality data about Iowa education. Giving teachers and administrators the tools for deep data analysis offers them a more detailed picture of student achievement and the factors that influence student performance. With this data in hand, Iowa educators are empowered to help all students achieve greater success.

The funds will also change the way student data moves across educational entities throughout the state, allowing for robust security and increased efficiency.

#### **Statewide Educational Data Warehouse - EdInsight**

IDE has committed significant internal and contractual resources to develop EdInsight. Input was sought from all levels of the Iowa education community to garner support and guidance regarding EdInsight's formation. Assistance from IES will permit IDE to capture and provide more information, more quickly, thereby improving results for the students and educators of Iowa.

EdInsight data available for analysis will be expanded by adding teachers, finances, additional assessments, transcripts, community colleges, and disaster mitigation data. IDE's research indicates that our constituency recognizes great value in the creation of a comprehensive unified data source which could be used to support schools and districts as well as improve educational outcomes for children. With assistance from the IES grant, the inclusion of this information in EdInsight would become feasible in a meaningful timeframe. This initiative will be addressed in greater detail later in the section.

#### **Standards-Based System for Interoperability**

A system for the automatic transmission of student data will enable the state education agency (SEA) and local education agencies (LEAs) in Iowa to improve the accuracy and timeliness of data; it will also free up valuable human resources currently expended in the manual data submission processes. A standards-based transmission system will also give LEAs the ability to quickly locate information on students transferring between districts.

#### **EDFacts and the National Governor's Association (NGA) Cohort Graduation Rate**

The funding received from the IES grant will allow Iowa to add dropout information when calculating graduation and cohort dropout rates with greater accuracy. IDE will also be able to augment EdInsight with EDFacts specifications and additional data which will satisfy EDFacts reporting requirements.

#### **Interoperability with Postsecondary Systems**

Lawmakers (both state and federal) request analyses that require information spanning the entire duration of a student's education. To respond to this need, Iowa must create interoperability with postsecondary data systems. Currently, no funding mechanism exists to support this initiative, so support from IES will be crucial to its success.

#### **Link Workforce and Educational Data Systems**

To assess the preparedness of graduates for future employment or further education, IDE would explore linking workforce information and IDE PK-12 and community college data. Resources from IES would be used to investigate the most appropriate location and structure for organizing and sharing this information.

### **Standardized and Electronic Transcripts**

Members of the Iowa postsecondary community have requested a standardized transcript format, stored in a centralized location which will reduce labor costs and transcript processing time, and increase data quality. With such a system, IDE would also be able to provide a service directly to the citizens of Iowa by having secure access to a non-transient source of transcript information in the form of a statewide transcript repository.

### **On the Horizon**

The \$8.8 million IES grant is for five years so many of these projects are in their infancy. The two cornerstones of the state longitudinal data system initiative – EdInsight and the Iowa High School Transcript Repository (aka E-transcripts and Student Record Exchange) – are the only two activities underway and will be discussed in greater detail.

## **Iowa Department of Education Data Warehouse: EdInsight**

### **Purpose**

EdInsight will provide the Iowa education community consistent and accurate longitudinal information on education outcomes and the analytical tools needed to improve data-driven, evidence-based decision making at the state, area education agency, and local levels and thereby improve student success. Specifically, EdInsight will provide the education community with analytical capacity to perform self examination on their federal mandates – Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and Annual Progress Report (APR) - in the near term and will have analytical reports for the Iowa Core Curriculum that will roll out simultaneously with the Core.

### **Activities and Accomplishments/Background**

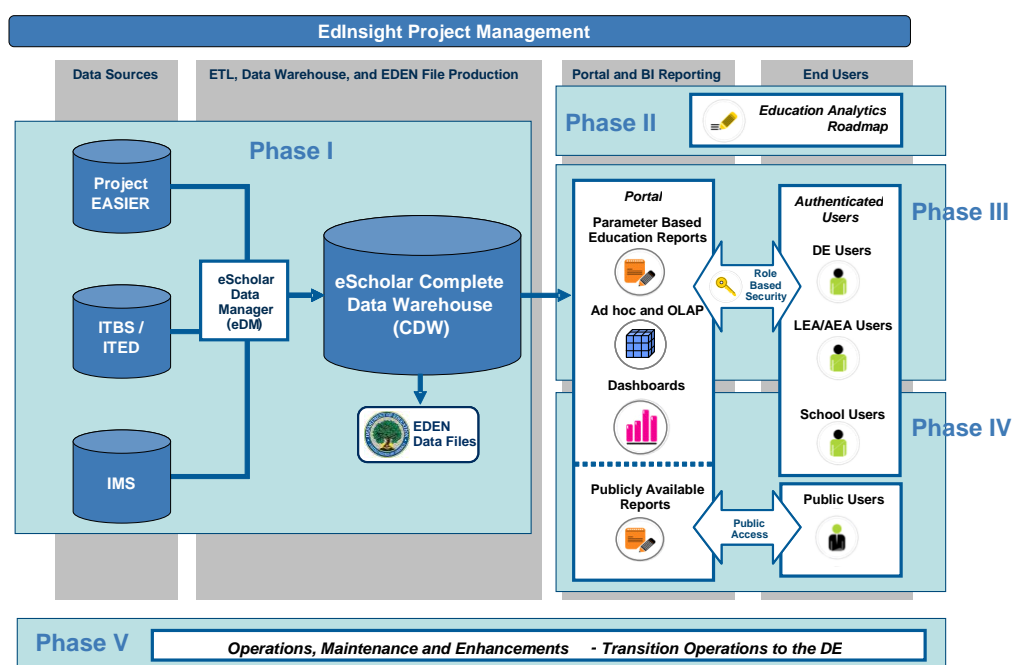
Data are one of an educational institution's most valuable, but underused, assets. At the IDE, the area education agencies (AEAs), and in our schools and districts across the state, data about students, staff, courses, programs, schools, revenues, and expenditures have been collected and managed in order to report on the status and progress of our educational system to the people of Iowa, its lawmakers, and the federal government. The IDE has used this collection of data to produce *The Annual Condition of Education Report* to inform a host of planning and operational decisions, and to guide policy development and implementation. Unfortunately, Iowa's educational stakeholders do not yet have sufficient access to enough timely, high quality data and analytical tools to adequately support their decision-making.

EdInsight will leverage state and local commitment to improving education data quality and use in Iowa by developing, implementing, and sustaining a statewide longitudinal data system that utilizes individual student information. This system will improve the utility, accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of our data; reduce redundancy within our collections; decrease reporting burden on our schools and districts; streamline federal reporting; improve stakeholder access to longitudinal data; guide data-driven decision making at all levels of education; enable data

exchange across institutions within the state; protect privacy and confidentiality; support research to improve our understanding of effective management and instructional policies; and facilitate data driven decision-making that will affect student learning.

EdInsight has a “back end” that will have three sets of data loaded during implementation: Project EASIER (Electronic Access System for Iowa Education Records), which is student level data; Information Management System (IMS), special education student level data; and Iowa Testing Program student level data. EdInsight will link all these disparate data together for analysis across these domains of information enabling new and meaningful analysis. On the “front end,” different education stakeholders (IDE staff, area education agency staff, and local district staff) can access data in preformatted reports and more sophisticated analytical tools, dependent on the user’s expertise and security clearances.

Figure 16  
**EdInsight**



The design of EdInsight has been a customer-focused product from its inception and will continue to be one. During the spring of 2008, DE partnered with Iowa’s AEAs to conduct a data and reporting needs assessment among local school districts and area education agency staff from across the state. The goal of this assessment was to solicit user input on the portal design and reporting interfaces for the statewide rollout of EdInsight.

The IDE utilized a two-pronged approach in gathering information by:

- conducting a statewide survey to quantify the magnitude of responses; and
- convening a series of focus groups to capture the depth and breadth of qualitative aspects.

The target audience contained district superintendents, principals, assessment coordinators, curriculum directors, teachers and other district personnel, as well as AEA staff. There were 179 participants in the 20 focus groups held statewide, two per AEA, and 445 survey respondents. Triangulating findings from both of these techniques led to the roadmap for the initial release of EdInsight Version 1.0 this summer, 2009, to a limited number of users.

**Table 4**  
**EdInsight Reports with Version Releases**

Family	Subject Area	Main Report Areas	Sub Report Areas
1.0 ASMT	Assessment / Growth	ASMT 1.1 – Individual Reports	ASMT 1.1.1 Individual Performance Detail ASMT 1.1.2 Individual Performance Trend and Comparison
		ASMT 1.2 - Group Reports	
		ASMT 1.3 - Cohort Reports	
		ASMT 1.4 – Assessment Cube	
		ASMT 1.5 - Alternate Assessment	
2.0 EQTY	Equity / School Improvement	EQTY 2.1 – AEA/District Equity Report	
4.0 APR	APR Report	APR 4.1 – Student Achievement	
		APR 4.2 – School Report Card for the Public	
5.0 ENRL	Enrollment	ENRL 5.1 – Attendance Report	
		ENRL 5.2 – Certified Enrollment Report	
6.0 CURR	Curriculum	CURR 6.1 – Curriculum Accreditation Report	
		CURR 6.2 – Student Course History Report	
		CURR 6.3 – College Credit Course Report	
		CURR 6.4 – Higher Level Course Report	
7.0 SPED	Special Education	SPED 7.1 – Suspensions and Expulsions	
		SPED 7.2 – Achievement	
		SPED 7.3 – Graduation	
		SPED 7.4 – Drop Out	
		SPED 7.5 – Disproportionality	
9.0 UTIL	Utilities	UTIL 9.1 – Transfer of Historical Data	
		UTIL 9.2 – School and District Comparison Report	
11.0 IND	Student Indicators	IND 11.1 - Graduation	
		IND 11.2 - Drop Out	
		IND 11.3 - Attendance	
		IND 11.4 - Discipline	
12.0 PRGM	Program Indicators	PRGM 12.1 - At Risk	
		PRGM 12.2 - Talented and Gifted	

	New Reports
	4
	5
	15
	24



## **Expected Results**

EdInsight's goals are to:

- Provide the education community a single repository of combined data from multiple sources on one common system;
- Provide tools and training in the use of data for benchmarking and longitudinal and comparative analysis;
- Empower data driven decision making for education stakeholders; and
- Increase confidence in data by defining and implementing processes to improve data consistency, reliability, and quality.

## **On the Horizon**

**Short-term Release Schedule** - In the fall of 2009 a larger release to 200 users is scheduled. Ultimately, the rollout to all AEAs and districts of Version 1.5 would begin January – February 2010.

As was mentioned in the future per the IES grant, the Department will expand the warehouse to include other data:

- Staff data;
- Financial data;
- Additional achievement data;
- District program data; and
- Transcript data.

Further, these data will also be linked to higher education data and workforce data. How that will happen, who has access, and where it will be housed has yet to be determined.

## **Iowa High School Transcript Repository (a.k.a. E-transcripts)**

### **Purpose**

The Iowa High School Transcript Repository will be an electronic repository of high school transcript information that will enable high school graduates to have their transcripts sent to postsecondary institutions or employers electronically, as well as providing a central location for all accredited high school transcripts. The initiative will also allow for electronic transfer of student records between local school districts which will improve the timeliness of data, reduce manual entry, and bolster the mitigation strategy for those districts' natural disaster plans. Further, having these data will allow for the integration of transcript data into EdInsight, the statewide education data warehouse, for analyses.

### **Activities and Accomplishments/Background**

The Department of Education established Project EASIER in the 1995-1996 school year. The major goals and components were and remain:

- Sending individual student data electronically from Iowa school districts to the Department of Education to fulfill state and federal reports;
- Sending high school transcript data electronically to colleges and universities; and
- Enabling school districts to electronically exchange student records when students transfer to other districts within the state of Iowa.

The first goal has been achieved, and beginning with the 2004-2005 school year, the Department receives through Project EASIER data on each student enrolled in every public school district. As part of the Project EASIER system, all public PK-12 students have been assigned a unique state student ID and many nonpublic schools are also using the ID system. Further, the Des Moines Independent School District conducted a proof of concept by sending electronic transcripts to the University of Northern Iowa and Iowa State University using a third party software called Entrata.

The Department worked with both an elementary/secondary and postsecondary advisory committee. The postsecondary advisory committee has reviewed and agreed to data elements on transcripts. In addition to their representation on the committee, Department staff have met with the registrars and/or admission officers at Iowa State, The University of Iowa, the University of Northern Iowa, the community colleges and some private colleges to review transcript content and the potential benefits for moving transcripts electronically. Recently, representation has been added to the committee representing the financial aid directors and the Iowa College Student Aid Commission.

IDE is now ready to take the project to the implementation phase. A contract was signed as of May 22, 2009, with Pearson. Pearson will also be working with education industry notables of Edustructures, National Transcript Center, and ESP.

### **Expected Results**

Implementation of the data repository will allow school districts to leverage data currently in their student information system, which will include electronic transcript data that can be sent to a postsecondary institution or between local school districts. It will also allow the state to keep a transcript of all Iowa high school graduates in a central repository. Many stakeholders stand to benefit from the program.

Data housed in the transcript repository can fulfill the 2006 legislative mandate that requires school districts to report the students that have completed a core of curriculum more accurately than those data collected in Project EASIER, especially when integrated with the analytical capabilities of EdInsight. By leveraging data maintained in a district's student information system through an integrated transport mechanism, the Department can reduce the manual data-reporting burden for the school district to fulfill this required report.



It is very clear that the postsecondary community would like a standardized transcript format. Indisputably there would be benefits institutionally of reduced processing time, reduced labor costs, and increased data quality. The ability to move transcripts electronically would be made available to all public school districts through the proposed application. Ease of use will benefit school registrars and standardized transcripts will benefit postsecondary registrars, especially with such additional requirements as calculating the Regents Admission Index (RAI).

Citizens of Iowa would benefit from a transcript repository centrally housed at the Iowa Department of Education from which they could request that their transcript be sent to entities (postsecondary institutions or employers) that may require that information many years after they graduate. Having the information housed in a central location would be similar to citizens being able to access their birth certificate from a central location at the Department of Health. School districts are required to keep an official permanent record on each student; however, historical records may not be as readily accessible. The same is true as school districts reorganize or dissolve. Permanent records are transferred but may not be readily accessible. Having a repository of transcripts housed at the Iowa Department of Education would provide a service to the citizens of Iowa.

Another convenience for the citizens of Iowa would be access to a transcript at any time of the year. In many cases, school district staff have flexible schedules in the summer and students or former graduates that want to have their transcript sent to a postsecondary institution may not be able to do so if the appropriate school district staff person is not available. The proposed application would allow the student to authorize the postsecondary institution to “pull” the transcript from the repository and thus eliminate the need to wait and have a school district approve the release.

With the recent natural disasters, it is worth pointing out that a centrally housed repository with relatively current student transcripts could serve as a mitigation strategy for disaster recovery. If a district that were to experience a server loss or file loss, the district would at a minimum be able to recover the students' grades. It would also support educational continuity. In the case where a community is devastated and students will be attending other districts for an interim period, these districts would have relatively current records of the students' educational progress and achievement for decision-making. Such is the case for the Aplington-Parkersburg Community School District.

### **On the Horizon**

The Iowa High School Transcript Repository has a very aggressive timeline. The hope is that the vendor will begin to implement the system in the fall, such that local districts may begin submitting transcripts electronically to postsecondary institutions. The E-transcript solution is one that has been implemented in many states and thousands of colleges around the country already, so the standard application itself is very mature and stable.

This project will also include a student record exchange component between districts. This will be implemented after the transcript portion of the process is under operation. The technology for accomplishing the student record exchange is tied up in the standards-based system for interoperability activities that will be undertaken with IES grant monies.

IDE is also working with the Iowa College Student Aid Commission to integrate this project into their new portal that will be the access point to students “eighth grade plans.” The Commission also has a new federal grant with roughly \$8 million for information technology upgrades. As part of this collaborative, IDE is working with the Commission to determine which data can be shared and how they will be shared for this project.

## **INITIATIVE 5: Improve educator preparation programs**

### **Purpose**

National research consistently indicates that the two most important factors in student achievement are 1) the classroom teacher and 2) the building administrator. Acknowledging these findings, the Department addresses the preparation of these critical components through the program approval process and, when possible, through statewide leadership in the goal of continuous improvement of preparation programs.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

#### **Educator Preparation (Teacher and Educational Leader)**

##### **Chapter 79 Administrative Rules for Educator Preparation**

During 2008-2009, representatives from the DE, teacher and administrator programs at institutions of higher education (IHE), the Board of Educational Examiners (BoEE), and local education agencies participated in the rewriting process for Chapter 79. The proposed new rules update administrator preparation program requirements, address changing forms of delivery systems for all preparation programs, and provide requirements for professional educational programs that lead to state licensure in areas other than teacher or administrator preparation. An important change affecting all preparation programs is the inclusion of requirements that better prepare new educators to implement the required Iowa Core Curriculum. A detailed template has been created to guide programs as they prepare for the approval process.

##### **Educator Preparation Program Site Reviews**

In preparation for a site review, the institution conducts a self-study and writes an Institutional Report (IR) that shows how the institution meets all Chapter 79 Standards. A state panel and the site visit team (including representation from the DE, IHEs, LEAs, etc.) read and review the report and participate in a preliminary review meeting to prepare a review feedback report based on the IR. An on-campus site visit is then conducted; the site visit team gathers information to validate the IR through interviews and observations, analyzes information, and writes a draft of the

final report. That draft is reviewed and revised by the site visit team and then sent to the IHE. The IHE responds to the final report and takes the necessary actions to address unmet standards. A summary report is submitted to the State Board with a recommendation concerning re-approval of the program. The State Board of Education makes the final decision on program approval.

### **Educator Preparation Program Enrollment Trends**

Each year, the DE collects data on the numbers of individuals enrolled in and completing educator preparation programs in the state. Programs report the number of student teachers each year; this is the most reliable number to indicate the actual number of individuals completing Iowa teacher preparation programs and entering the profession. Programs also report the numbers of individuals being recommended for each endorsement, including administrators and school counselors.

## **Teacher Preparation**

### **Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant (TQE)**

In 2005, the DE was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Education in the amount of \$6.3 million. This grant has been used to increase the effectiveness of teacher education programs statewide. Recent work sponsored by the grant includes the following:

- **Assessment Systems:** All Iowa teacher preparation programs have refined assessment systems to better evaluate candidate performance and program effectiveness;
- **English Language Learners:** Teacher preparation programs across the state participated in annual language and cultural conferences with P-12 educators and received technical assistance in providing their candidates with authentic ELL experiences. Many programs received Polycoms that facilitate interaction with P-12 classrooms, especially those involving ELL students;
- **Diverse Learners:** A series of professional development opportunities were provided over an 18-month time frame with a focus on diverse learners. Included was a statewide Summit on Diverse Learners, attended by over 200 educators from preparation, AEAs, PK-12, the DE, and professional organizations;
- **Teacher Disposition:** In response to growing research that teacher beliefs and attitudes (dispositions) affect teacher success, a statewide team created the research-based Iowa Disposition Model. This model has been shared statewide and nationally; work on application of this model continues among Iowa programs;
- **Iowa Core Curriculum:** The majority of preparation programs were represented at the Iowa Core Curriculum Leadership Modules provided through the AEAs. Recently statewide ICN presentations introduced the Iowa Core Curriculum to a broad audience of preparation faculty. Follow-up regional workshops provided increased emphasis on assessment for learning and meeting learning needs of all students in P-12 classrooms; and

- **Surveys:** The New Teacher Center at the University of California surveyed recent graduates of Iowa programs who are teaching in Iowa as well as their mentors and administrators regarding their perceptions of the new teachers' preparation. Individual results were sent to programs. State results were aggregated and shared with programs.

## **Educational Leadership Preparation**

### **State Panel for Approval of New Educational Leadership Programs**

When an IHE intends to apply for a new administrator preparation program, the applicants will submit a proposal that responds to state policy guidance and serves effectively to implement the state vision of school and leadership excellence. The Educational Leadership State Panel (a seven-member panel that is funded by the Wallace Foundation Grant) that includes representation from the DE, administrators from LEAs (a principal and a superintendent), an AEA chief administrator, and representatives from the Iowa Council of Professors of Educational Administration (ICPEA) reviews the application materials. During the review of new programs, the panel reads and reviews the application materials and provides the institution with written questions and requests for information. Members of the panel have an opportunity to meet with representatives of each applicant to engage in conversations regarding the content of the application and provide follow-up to the panel's questions and requests. At the conclusion of the panel review, a written recommendation is provided to the State Board of Education who makes the final decision regarding program approval. Following full-approval by the State Board, the institution will be reviewed as part of the seven-year cycle for re-approval.

## **Results**

### **Annual Report Data**

Data collected from annual reports show that the total number of student teachers in Iowa teacher preparation programs has declined as have the number of individuals prepared to become elementary teachers and secondary social studies teachers. In contrast, the numbers of individuals recently prepared to become secondary English, mathematics, and science teachers have remained fairly steady. There has been a slight increase in the number of those who are becoming secondary foreign language teachers and a significant increase in the number of individuals prepared to become special education teachers.

The following table summarizes the trend data of newly prepared educators from Iowa preparation programs. It also displays information about the numbers of veteran Iowa teachers who were eligible to retire in the academic year 2008-2009 by virtue of reaching the IPERS retirement 'Rule of 88.'

Table 5  
**New Iowa Teachers and Teachers Eligible to Retire  
2003-2004 to 2008-2009**

Academic Year	Prepared 2003-2004	Prepared 2004-2005	Prepared 2005-2006	Prepared 2006-2007	Prepared 2007-2008	Iowa Teachers Eligible to retire 2008-2009
Student Teachers	3,291	3,166	2,952	2,843	2,653	3,165
K-6 Classroom Teachers	1,901	1,710	1,787	1,487	1,351	1,961
5-12 Social Studies	*	300	261	207	210	268
5-12 English/LA	*	197	180	177	180	306
5-12 Foreign Language	*	59	57	63	69	73
5-12 Mathematics	*	102	108	113	97	250
5-12 Science	*	128	109	102	104	219
Special Education	191	361	343	435	499	360
Counselors	133	84	84	88	121	203
K-12 Principals	166	180	115	118	114	185
Superintendents	31	41	43	28	42	108

\*Data not collected in this format in 2003-2004.

### **New Teacher Survey Results**

A summary of the survey conducted by the New Teacher Center included the following strengths of Iowa preparation programs: both first and second-year teachers are very positive about the quality of their preparation programs; mentors and site administrators find that new teachers are well prepared in content, teaching strategies, communicating with students, and creating equitable classrooms; preparation programs prepare teachers best of all to reflect on and continually evaluate their teaching; almost three quarters of administrators judge Iowa prepared teachers to be generally stronger than those from out of the state.

The weakest aspect of preparation as indicated in the 2008 survey is preparation of new teachers to work with English Language Learners and other special population students. Recently this area of preparation has been strengthened in the program review process, and all of Iowa's teacher preparation programs have participated in the recent professional development regarding diverse learners.

### **On the Horizon**

- During the 2008-2009 academic year seven teacher preparation programs were reviewed; no institutions with educational leadership programs were scheduled;
- The newly created web-based data collection system for preparation programs will be honed to aggregate and report the increased data

- requirements of the U.S. Department of Education under the Title II Higher Education Opportunities Act;
- In conjunction with the Board of Educational Examiners a web-based system will be developed for the review process and maintenance of updated curriculum exhibits, documents ensuring that preparation programs meet licensure requirements for specific endorsements. A schedule has been established to review and update endorsement requirements;
  - A consortium of the Regents universities is expected to provide the Department with plans for a teacher intern program that could be in place by fall of 2009. Three private colleges are in the process of developing teacher intern programs as well;
  - A white paper summarizing the Summit on Diverse Learners will be made available in the fall of 2009;
  - With approval of the proposed Chapter 79 rules, site visits for all educator preparation programs will move to a seven year cycle. A technical assistance manual will be developed for all preparation programs; and
  - The statewide survey of new teachers is expected to be conducted on a biennial schedule. Data will be shared with individual programs; aggregated data and trend analysis will provide direction for continual improvement of teacher preparation statewide.

### **GOAL 3 – *Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success.*** *(Postsecondary Education)*

#### **Measures of Success**

##### **MEASURE 1: Increase the percentage of students who have obtained an Associate of Arts (AA) degree who transfer into a four-year institution.**

The Associate of Arts (AA) degree is designed for transferability to a four-year university. Table 6 shows the transfer rate for Fiscal Years 2002 and 2006 cohorts. While the overall percentage declined slightly, the transfer rate for AA awardees remains quite high. In sum, the AA degree was a bridge for 2,849 students to access a Bachelor's-level education.

Table 6  
**Cumulative Transfer Rate, 2002 and 2006 Cohort**

Cohort	N	Transfer	%
2002	3,713	2,491	67.08%
2006	4,374	2,849	65.14%



**MEASURE 2: Increase graduation rates by race/ethnicity and gender at Iowa postsecondary institutions.**

Female students attending community college in Iowa continue to have a higher graduation rate than males. The graduation rate for all minority groups except Hispanic has increased in the last year, however, the graduation rate for minorities is still significantly lower than for white students. One of the reasons for this discrepancy is that minorities are graduating, but many of them take longer than whites. Anyone who does not graduate within three years is not counted in the graduation rate.

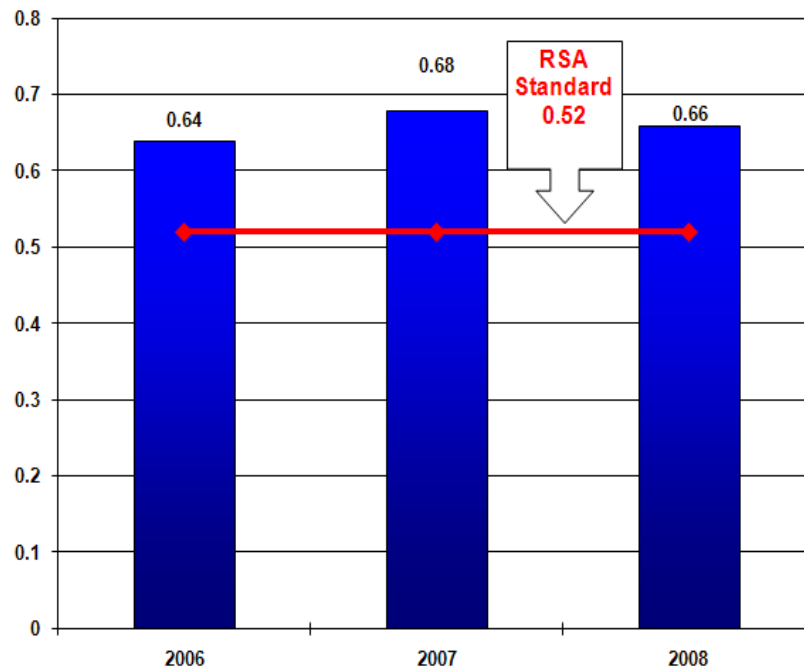
Table 7  
**Graduation Rates**

	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006
Total Cohort	41.65%	41.06%	39.71%	38.85%	38.76%	39.07%
<i>Gender</i>						
Male	40.51	39.57	38.90	37.10	36.67	37.57
Female	42.97	42.69	40.59	40.85	41.07	40.83
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>						
White	43.23	42.75	41.77	41.14	41.19	41.23
African American	22.95	21.45	17.59	17.53	17.39	19.40
Hispanic	28.50	31.61	23.63	30.66	25.35	23.74
Asian	24.49	31.08	28.65	24.68	20.42	27.03
American Indian	31.37	38.36	33.33	21.79	14.29	27.12

**MEASURE 3: Increase the average hourly wage of clients employed as a result of vocational rehabilitation services compared with the State of Iowa average hourly wage.**

Figure 17

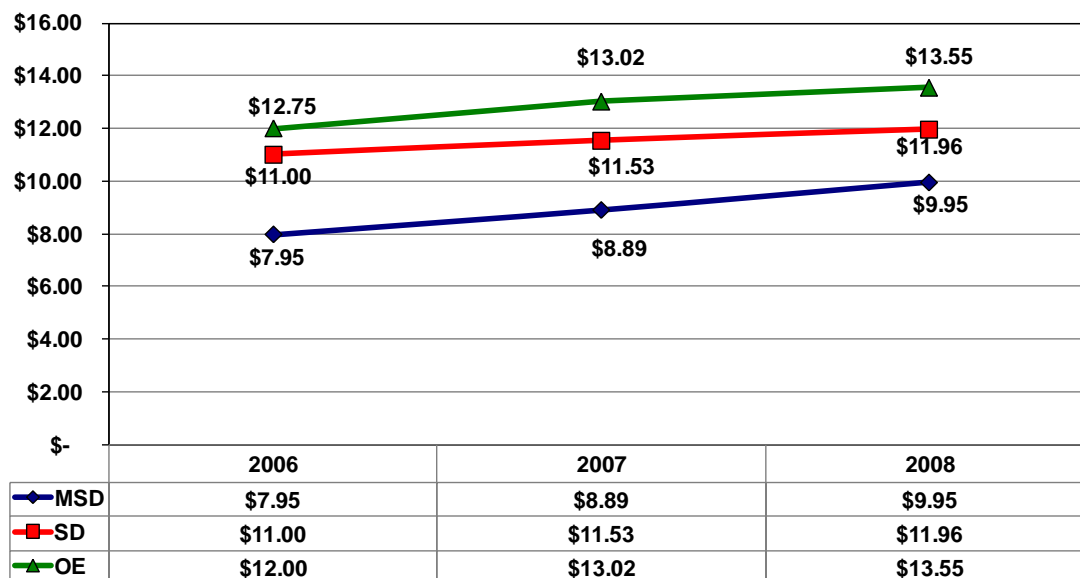
**1.5 Earnings as a Ratio to the State Average (RSA) Hourly**



IVRS still exceeds the federal RSA standard of requiring its consumers to make at least .52 of the average wages of ALL Iowans.



Figure 18  
Average Hourly Wage



This graph reflects that wages for the Most Significantly Disabled (MSD), Significantly Disabled (SD), and Others Eligible (OE) wages are rising.

## Major Initiatives

**INITIATIVE 1: Provide support for STEM activities, *Project Lead the Way*, and entrepreneurship education.**

### STEM - Project Lead the Way (PLTW)

#### Purpose

Project Lead the Way® (PLTW) is a model which is being utilized on a statewide basis to foster the integration of academics into career and technical education and create a seamless transition for students to move from the secondary level to higher education. PLTW is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation that promotes pre-engineering education for middle and high school students. PLTW incorporates strong partnerships between the public schools, higher education institutions and the private sector to increase the quantity and quality of Iowa's advanced manufacturing and biotechnology workforce. The broad scope of the PLTW program prepares students for engineering and related careers at Iowa's community colleges and four-year institutions. PLTW consists of the following courses:

- Introduction to Engineering and Design;
- Principles of Engineering;
- Digital Electronics;

- Biotechnology Engineering;
- Civil Engineering and Architecture;
- Computer Integrated Manufacturing;
- Engineering Development and Design; and
- Gateway to Technology (Middle school program).

In addition, PLTW offers an exciting Middle School Technology Curriculum: Gateway To Technology. This project provides a project-based, hands-on learning approach for middle schools. The curriculum is 45 weeks in length and is divided into five nine-week units from the following: Design and Modeling; The Magic of Electrons; The Science of Technology; Automation and Robotics; and Flight and Space. Designed for all students, the units address national standards in math, science and technology.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

- Forty-two grants were awarded for the Iowa PLTW Partnership Grant involving 74 secondary schools. Some schools implemented the program fall of 2008 and others implemented in 2009;
- A total of \$2,195,722 has been awarded for the Iowa PLTW Partnership Grants. The Iowa Department of Economic Development contributed \$627,836, the community colleges provided \$627,836 and \$940,050 came from the Kern Family foundation;
- The next Iowa PLTW Partnership application deadline is November, 2009;
- Seven Biotechnical engineering grants were awarded in 2009. All of these schools have implemented PLTW and will augment the program with the Biotechnical Engineering courses;
- A total of \$45,000 has been awarded for the Biotechnical Engineering Grants;
- Both the University of Iowa and Iowa State University provide the opportunity for students to receive credit for PLTW courses. Credit is offered for all eight PLTW pre-engineering courses;
- Counselors play a key role answering student and parent questions about the PLTW program and enrolling students in appropriate PLTW courses. They also counsel students as they consider engineering, engineering technology, and related career fields of study. PLTW counselors were provided training in November 2007 at the University of Iowa and in November 2008 at Iowa State University. Training for counselors is scheduled in November 2009 at the University of Iowa;
- The private sector has committed more than \$4.0 million to assist educational institutions implement PLTW; and
- PLTW has completed the biomedical sciences program. It was successfully piloted in seven states and is available for implementation.

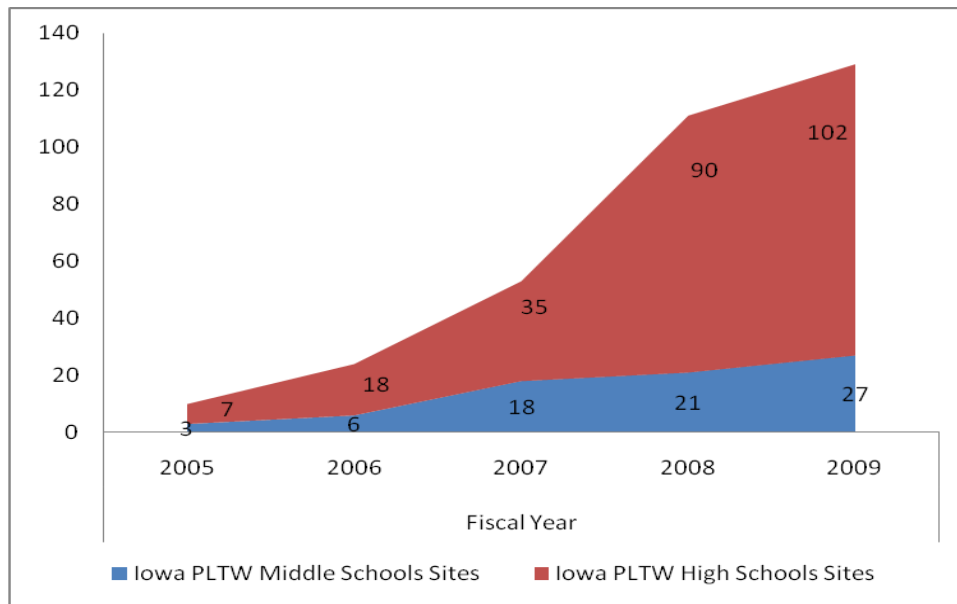
## Results

Iowa's PLTW Enrollment trends--

- PLTW enrollment in 2005-2006 was compiled for the six public high school sites. The total enrollment was 233, (83 percent were male, and 17 percent were female.);
- PLTW enrollment in 2006-2007 was compiled for thirteen public high school sites. The total enrollment was 1,044, (84.9 percent were males and 15.1 percent were females.); and
- PLTW enrollment in 2007-2008 was compiled for 22 public school districts. The total enrollment was 1,782 (15 percent were female). Minorities currently make up 9.9 percent of PLTW enrollment. Statewide, minorities are 14.4 percent of total student enrollment. Asian American students were over-represented in PLTW. African American students were underrepresented, 5.4 percent (statewide average) to 2.9 percent (enrollment in PLTW); as were Hispanic Americans, 6.3 to 3.9 percent; and American Indians, 0.6 to 0.4 percent.

Figure 19

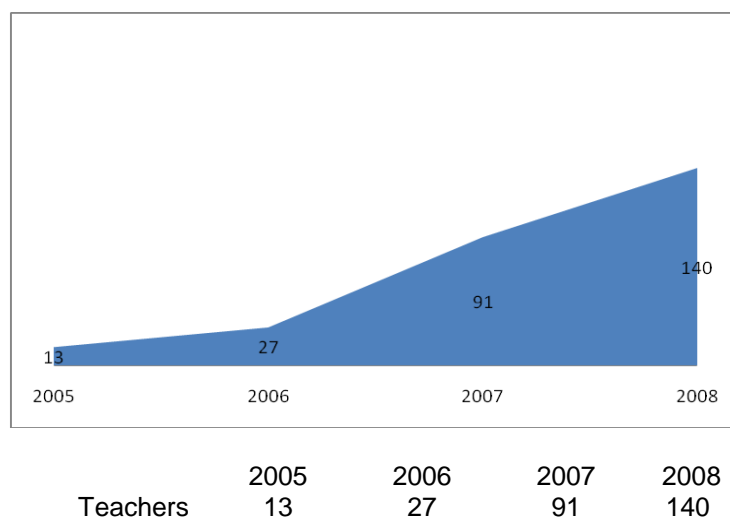
### PLTW Program Sites



	Fiscal Year				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Middle Schools	3	6	18	21	27
High Schools	7	18	35	90	102

Every teacher must successfully complete an intense two-week training institute conducted by an affiliate University-College of Engineering. Following is a chart showing the number of Iowa PLTW teachers trained by year:

Figure 20  
**PLTW Teachers Trained**



### **On the Horizon**

Professional development will be offered in 2009-2010 to counselors and PLTW teachers through conferences, summer training sessions and web-based professional development training opportunities.

In order to assist schools that seek to become a certified PLTW site, Iowa will increase the capacity by training community college leaders to serve on the certification teams. The certification process is a requirement for PLTW schools to offer college credit options to their students.

The Kern Family will remain a partner within the Iowa Partnership initiative and provide individual schools with grant opportunities for the Gateway to Technology middle school program.

## **Entrepreneurship Education**

### **Purpose**

*Iowa Code Chapter 258*, requires a vocational program sequence to address the following: new and emerging technologies; job-seeking; job-keeping and other employment skills, including self-employment and entrepreneurial skills, which reflect current industry standards; leadership skills; entrepreneurial and local-market needs; and the strengthening of basic academic skills.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

The Entrepreneurship Program Management Committee was formed in spring 2009. The committee is currently working on developing and providing education and training resources for teachers who teach entrepreneurship.

The Jacobson Institute will return to Spencer and Council Bluffs in June 2009 to provide face-to-face teacher training. In addition to the introductory entrepreneurship training, the Institute will facilitate a workshop helping educators design a stand-alone entrepreneurship course.

The Jacobson Institute is currently working with a small group of teachers who are piloting four graduate-level online entrepreneurship courses geared specifically for secondary educators. Beginning in fall 2009 educators nationwide will have the opportunity to build their entrepreneurship skill set. Educators will have the opportunity to participate in up to four one-credit hour courses.

More than 500 high school students and teachers attended one of four *Be Your Own Boss* regional entrepreneurship conferences (sponsored by The Jacobson Institute) held in Spencer, Council Bluffs, Mason City and Cedar Falls. The *Be Your Own Boss* conference exposes students to entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

### **On the Horizon**

The Iowa Department of Education, Bureau for Career and Technical Education Services, and the Jacobson Institute of Entrepreneurial Education are working together to offer an opportunity for teachers who teach entrepreneurship as a standalone class or teach entrepreneurship that is specifically integrated within other classes. Teachers from each career and technical education service area (Agriculture Education, Business and Information Technology, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Health Occupations Education, Industrial Technology Education, and Marketing Education) will collaborate to develop and enhance activities and lesson plans specific to their service area that focus on entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurship activities and lesson plans that are developed during the workshop will be posted on the DE's website and be used on the YouthBizCentral website (online entrepreneurship education <http://www.jacobsoninstitute.org/youthbizcentral.html>). This workshop is scheduled for June 2009.

Jacobson Institute summer camps will be held in four locations - Iowa City, Des Moines, Spencer and the Quad Cities - this summer. The Institute will partner with the Girls Scouts of Central Iowa to offer BizSmARTS, an entrepreneurial camp geared to expose girls to entrepreneurship and the arts in the Des Moines area.

## **INITIATIVE 2: Facilitate student transfers through articulation agreements.**

### **Perkins IV – Articulation**

#### **Purpose**

As part of the requirement for the Carl Perkins Act of 2006, all recipients of grants must develop and offer as an option to their students (and their parents, as appropriate) one or more career and technical programs of study for planning and completing their course work in a career and technical education content area. The program must incorporate secondary and postsecondary educational elements, including coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses that align secondary education with postsecondary education to adequately prepare students to succeed in postsecondary education. The program may include the opportunity for secondary students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment courses or other ways to earn postsecondary credit while enrolled in high school. The program must lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

The propose of the program of study initiative is to provide students and their parents with a sequence of the recommended academic and technical course work to be taken while in high school to prepare for the postsecondary career and technical education program of their choice while earning a diploma from their local high school.

#### **Activities and Accomplishments**

The Perkins IV Five-Year State Plan, which was approved by the State Board of Education and the U.S. Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) in the spring of 2008, proposed that recipients incorporate 75 percent of their secondary career and technical education programs into programs of study. During this past year, staff provided technical assistance to all recipients. The assistance provided recipients with an explanation of the components of a program of study and recommended processes and resources to be utilized to develop programs for students in conjunction with their community college partner.

#### **(Anticipated) Results and On the Horizon**

Additional technical assistance and professional development activities and model programs will be developed and presented to grant recipients by department staff over the next four years. The progress of grant recipients will be monitored via annual reports and on-site monitoring visits once every three years. It is anticipated that at the conclusion of this grant period, all students enrolled in Iowa high schools and their parents will have access to a program of studies to assist them in preparing for their career pathway and selecting the appropriate coursework for their postsecondary career and technical education program. Such planning is projected to have a positive impact on student success in high school, including high school

graduation rates as well as impacting their future success at the postsecondary level while reducing their need for remediation at the postsecondary level.

### **LACTS (Liaison Advisory Committee for Transfer Students)**

#### **Purpose**

The State has a long-standing history of voluntary articulation efforts between public institutions of higher education. The Liaison Advisory Committee for Transfer Students (LACTS) has six members, with three representatives from the community colleges and a representative from each of the Regent Universities. The DE and the Board of Regents each have an ex officio member that works with the committee.

#### **Activities and Accomplishments**

While there are a variety of course by course and program articulation agreements between the 15 community colleges and the Regent universities, there are eight statewide articulation agreements which assist students in the transfer process. Those agreements are:

- Associate of Arts Articulation Agreement;
- Associate of Science Articulation Agreement;
- Career and Technical Credit Agreement;
- Common Grading Symbols and Definitions Agreement;
- Credit by Examination Agreement (which includes Advanced Placement);
- Career and Technical Programs in Electronics/Electronic-Based Technology Agreement;
- Awarding and Transferring College Credit for Educational Experience in the Armed Forces; and
- Evaluating International Student Academic Credentials.

A complete listing of articulation agreements is published in both a printed and electronic format under the title *The Public Connection*, Volume I and Volume II. These publications are also posted on the Department of Education's website. Articulation agreements are reviewed and reaffirmed annually.

The Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation assisted with the coordination and submittal of a legislatively mandated report on articulation and transfer issues. This legislation, included as part of the Education Appropriations Bill that was passed in 2008, required the DE to convene a liaison advisory committee on transfer students to study articulation transferability issues, measures, and agreements. Since there has been a statewide LACTS committee in existence for many years, the Department utilized that committee. The first committee meeting was on July 1, 2008, with follow up meetings in September, 2008 and December, 2008. The *Progress Report on Articulation in Iowa* was sent to the General Assembly on December 31, 2008.



## **On the Horizon**

In the Spring 2009, House File 815 was passed by the Legislature and sent to the Governor for his signature. This legislation deals with articulation between the Community Colleges of Iowa and the Regent Institutions. The Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation will again assist with coordinating and submitting a legislatively mandated report on articulation and transfer issues in the State. This legislation has the additional requirement of providing an **annual** update on issues and recommendations on articulation. A final report will be due to the General Assembly by January 15 each year.

## **INITIATIVE 3: Improve the quality of data and information.**

### **Purpose**

The Management Information System (MIS) Reporting Manual and Data Dictionary are utilized in the collection of data from the community colleges in Iowa. The reporting manual and data dictionary are reviewed and revised annually.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

There are several significant changes to the reporting manual. The changes are related to changing requirements and trends in data collection and utilization by federal and state administrations and present economic challenges. The changes include streamlining of MIS data collection to reflect the educational process, not the funding sources. All financial aspects, including funding sources, are moved to the Accounting Manual. The MIS Reporting Manual requires reporting Race and Ethnicity in accordance with the new federal requirements. Special efforts are applied to report developmental and distance learning education aspects in greater detail and accuracy, and to reflect stricter FERPA requirements to personally identifiable data elements.

A special Data Quality team, consisting of representatives of all data reporting areas from a number of colleges, was created to work on precision of Data Dictionary definitions in order to remove inaccuracies, redundancy and to improve the data reporting process. The dictionary has been revised successfully, and the Data Quality team has initiated an ongoing process to work on improvements of Data Quality as a joint effort between the Department of Education and all parties involved.

The MIS team has significantly changed both the content and the form of all data reports, including the *Condition of Community Colleges Annual Report*, to create data reports that are helpful, user-friendly, accessible and appealing.

### **Results**

Examples of reports based on MIS data include the *Fiscal Year 2008 Condition of Community Colleges report*, *High School Enrollment Report*, *Community College Performance Indicators Report* and a number of additional ongoing reports.



### **On the Horizon**

The Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation MIS team is continuing to meet with college leaders about changes to MIS reporting and to provide customized reports.

The team is meeting with MIS reporting officers, information technology staff involved with reporting, human resource staff, registrars, adult deans and directors, institutional researchers, and others, including some college presidents. Any proposed changes in the MIS reporting requirements undergo the scrutiny of MIS SWAT team, field testing and are implemented based on informed decisions.

The MIS team expects to conduct college visits annually.

### **INITIATIVE 4: Align curriculum so that students are better prepared for the global workforce.**

#### **Purpose**

The Iowa Career Information System (Iowa Choices), [www.ihaveaplaniowa.org](http://www.ihaveaplaniowa.org), provides career information and career resources to Iowans in order to promote improved career planning and to prepare every student for success at postsecondary institutions and the workplace. This electronic portal provides a myriad of career planning information and resources that includes how high school courses (core curriculum classes and career and technical education [CTE] classes) align to a global workforce.

#### **Activities and Accomplishments**

Recent legislation, Senate File 2216, requires every Iowa student, beginning in the eighth grade to complete a career and education planning process utilizing an electronic portfolio. By the time a student graduates in Iowa, the student will have taken career assessments or inventories, researched different career journeys within their interests, built a course plan for secondary and postsecondary, created employability documents, and researched school and financial aid opportunities for career choices. This comprehensive system of assessments, planning tools, databases, career interviews, connecting organizational links, and more allows students to create online portfolios that follow the students from middle school to college. The portfolios are part of the career development process to equip students with broad information to assist in narrowing down hundreds of career and educational possibilities to those matching the characteristics of the individual student. The electronic nature of Iowa Choices provides schools with graduation plans that are flexible documents for use by the student and his/her family in planning for post-secondary training or school. To complement this electronic career information system, other career resources are available for educators to utilize in their classrooms, curriculum or educational projects, and individual or group career facilitation.

**1. Iowa Career Resource Guide and 16 Occupational Poster Set**

The Iowa Career Resource Guide, developed through a partnership with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) and the Iowa Department of Education, provides up-to-date labor market information of more than 200 careers in Iowa, organized by the 16 Career Clusters framework. This information includes the average hourly wages by the amount of experience, projected career growth over a 10-year period, and the educational level needed for the career. Sections of the guide include: a career cluster-based interest inventory, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, Iowa colleges and universities, financial aid, apprenticeships, IWD offices, job searching and interview skills, and more. In addition, wall-sized occupational posters were printed of the 16-career clusters information in the Iowa Career Resource Guide for use in each school's classrooms and common areas. This resource was distributed to schools over the last year as a supplementary text and resource for career education.

**2. Community College Program Brochure**

The community college program brochure provides general information about Iowa's community colleges' major functions as an educational entity. Sections include college transfer, career and technical education, adult/continuing education, financial aid, apprenticeship programs, student services, and more. The brochure unfolds into a poster grid that includes program offerings broken down by the career cluster and which community college(s) offer the program. The poster notes whether the individual programs are college transfer (arts and sciences) or career and technical (or career option) and what type of credential is awarded upon completion. This resource was distributed to schools and area education agencies to inform school counselors, career advisors/advisee program coordinators, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and educators about the breadth and depth of community college programs.

**Results**

- Iowa Choices is used extensively by educational institutions and other entities in Iowa. A total of 836 schools and 132 postsecondary institutions were provided with free access to Iowa Choices Products in fiscal year 2008. Training was provided for over 1,200 educators, counselors, and administrators through the area education agency or community college professional development sessions or workshops. Over 76,000 portfolios were created in fiscal years 2007-2008 with over 675,000 visits to Iowa Choices in the Iowa secondary schools.
- Over 70,000 Iowa Career Resource Guides were printed and distributed through the area education agency personnel to over 900 middle and high schools, community colleges, universities, and IWD One-Stop Centers.
- Over 400 sets of posters (4,500 posters) have been distributed to Iowa secondary schools and community colleges.

- Over 7,000 community college program brochures were distributed as a resource for counseling students and adults on Iowa community college programs and the linkages between high school and community college courses.

### **On the Horizon**

With the passage of legislation, Senate File 2216 on core curriculum, the state-designated career information system will be used as the tool for student planning, the eighth grade plan and the Iowa Core Curriculum knowledge and skills. A partnership between the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (ICSAC) and the Department of Education will provide free access for Iowa Choices Explorer (middle school) and Planner (high school), and will provide trainers to the schools to assist the educators and counselors with career information and the eighth grade plan. This school year, 2008-2009, all middle schools will be trained in the components of Iowa Choices in order to assist eighth grade students with the planning process. Choices training will continue for the high school educators as they assist students in the post-secondary paths. Next year, the career planning will continue to be reviewed and revised with ninth grade level state components.

As a result of this legislation, more emphasis will be on career development. Career development or career education is a process for each student as they find a future path through their school courses and required core curriculum. The eighth grade plan is just one gate required in the student process, with continuous input from the student, their parents, teachers, school counselors, and other educators. The career and education plan will be a flexible changeable document portfolio that will continue to assist the student in high school and the workforce.